

frankie

for the creative and curious

extra-special
bumper issue



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01

VISIT...

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editor
emma do
emma.do@frankiepress.com.au

**assistant editor
& digital editor**
shannon jenkins
shannon@frankiepress.com.au

senior designer
alice buda
alice@frankiepress.com.au

designer
caitlyn bendall
caitlyn@frankiepress.com.au

proofreader
mel campbell

marketing coordinator
iris mcpherson
iris@frankiepress.com.au

digital marketing manager
kelsey caruana
kelsey@frankiepress.com.au

branded content director
emily naismith
emily@frankiepress.com.au

general manager
gaye murray
gaye@frankiepress.com.au

nextmedia

managing director
arek widawski

**general manager –
consumer publishing**
carole jones

**production & digital
services manager**
jonathan bishop

email addresses are published for
professional communications only

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issue 111 talented contributors

photographic

sam biddle, sia duff, pip farquharson, sophie joyce, natalie mcomas,
phoebe powell, dean swindell, michael jalaru torres

editorial

serena coady, caro cooper, deirdre fidge, eilish gilligan, tara kenny, bridget mcarthur,
eleanor robertson, james shackell, kate stanton, phoebe thorburn, rebecca varcoe,
jack vening, alex warren

illustration

ana gamboa, sophie mcpike, kate pullen, monica tran, cass urquhart

poster artist

becki sinclair

cover artist

janelle burger

advertise in frankie

partnerships manager

molly condon
molly@frankiepress.com.au

partnerships manager

claire mullins
claire.mullins@frankiepress.com.au

production coordinator

lizzie dynon
lizzie@frankiepress.com.au

contact us

general enquiries

hello@frankiepress.com.au

subscriptions

frankie.com.au/subscribe
subscribe@mymagazines.com.au
1300 361 146

retail orders

retail@frankiepress.com.au

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ARCHETYPES



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our favourite things about summer

In no particular order: watermelon, purpley-orange sunsets, ice-cream trucks, losing track of time, frozen grapes, weird tan lines, outdoor cinemas, spending a whole day by the sea, spending a whole day at the park, trips with mates, making playlists, cheesy beach reads, buying a giant bag of ice from the servo, the smell of barbeques, wearing the loosest clothing you own, thunderstorms, granitas, escaping to the frozen aisle of the supermarket, the relief of a cool change, light at 9pm, garage sales, miraculously avoiding sunburn, buying magazines at the airport, having a cheese board for dinner, feeling like anything is possible.

We hope this issue keeps you company as you
soak up the summer rays. Enjoy!

x Emma and the frankie team



Receipts but organised

If you're storing, stashing or stuffing your receipts in hard-to-find spots, Xero can help you re-organise them all in one place. Simple.

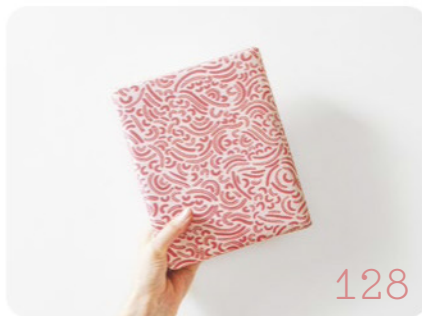


Beautiful
business





117



128



64



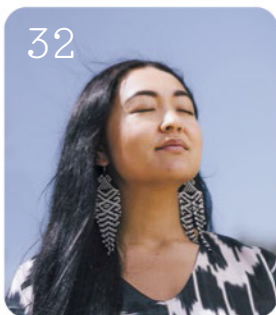
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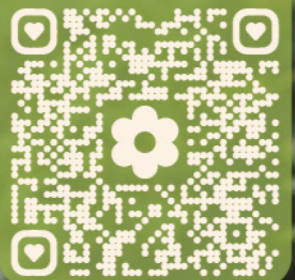
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dear frankie,

PIPE UP, PETALS. TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.

LETTERS@FRANKIE.COM.AU

Dear frankie, I don't really read you in chronological order. I open you up and let you take me wherever. Then the following sitting, I open you up from the start again and take in more and more. I am 15 and a budding musician, and in a whirlwind of black puffer jackets and vapes, you are a beautiful, colourful creative outlet that inspires me in my art and life. Thank you for bringing a much-needed arty fix to the trudge of adolescence. *Yours always, Ella xxx*

Dear frankie, I can't tell you how emotional I got reading Anna Spargo-Ryan's book extract in issue 110. Hearing her describe the feelings of meeting a new therapist for the first time made me feel seen. As someone who has been on the edge of life and then had to see many faces to help try and 'fix me', I know it's daunting every time, telling your story from scratch. Will they judge you? Will they think you're good/bad enough to see them again? Will they do anything to actually help you through? Thank you for sharing a bit of her story. It's nice to know I'm not alone. *Love, Britt*

Dear frankie, I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease this year, just a few weeks before I turned 20. In a week from now, I will have my first infusion of a relatively new drug called ustekinumab. While I can't express how nervous I am, Emily Naismith's article in issue 110 put me at ease by reminding me of the power of modern medicine. I'd like to tell her how proud I am of her 10km runs, and to share my hope of finally eating chocolate without getting a stomach ache! *Lots of love, Caitlin*

Hi frankie team, I just want to thank you for your perfectly timed edition of frankie feel-good! On top of the craziness of lockdowns,

over the last year I was dealing with cancer treatment. Since August this year, I have been living with the aftermath – something I did not expect. This edition has been devoured from cover to cover and will definitely be a keeper I will refer to often. Reading my thoughts and feelings in others' words was a healing experience. Thank you to all the writers who shared their experiences – you often don't get to know what it may mean for the readers. This one has found it incredibly helpful, validating and supportive. Keep up the awesome work! *Tania*

THE LETTER OF THE ISSUE WINS A LACK OF COLOR 'HOLIDAY BUCKET' HAT, RRP \$129, FROM LACKOFCOLOR.COM.AU

Dear frankie, We've all told a little white lie, and I loved reading about great fibs in issue 110. In year 10, I was dating a very athletic guy I went to school with. I didn't want him to know how physically challenged and uncoordinated I was (still am) but I was a student leader, and so when sports day came around, I was expected to participate. I was set to be humiliated. So, I did what any 15-year-old would do: I faked an injury. I pretended to roll my ankle a few steps into the 100m event. Went down like a sack of potatoes. I committed fully to the role like a method actor, so much so that he carried me to my bus at the end of the day. And they say chivalry is dead! I came clean about a year or so later, but it all worked out. We laughed about it and eventually got married, and I often still try to fake an injury to get out of things I'd rather not do. Thanks for the laughs. x *Eliza* ❀



A woman with dark hair dyed with vibrant blue and purple streaks, wearing round glasses with rainbow-colored lenses. She is smiling broadly and holding a small glass bottle labeled 'Peaches & Waffles'. She is wearing a colorful, multi-colored geometric patterned sweater over a white shirt with black polka dots. The background is a warm-toned wall with framed art, including a pink heart with the word 'GROOVE' and a pink illustration of a woman.

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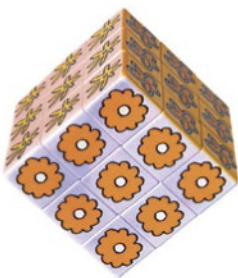
WWW.NIMKI.COM.AU





blue sky thinking

If you're looking for duds to throw on during a sticky summer day – duds that lend an air of cool and sophistication even when you can feel your make-up slowly sliding off your face – **Kowtow's** latest collection might have something for you. You'll be pumped to know that the Kiwi label's optimistic 'forever pieces' are backed up by some admirable sustainability efforts, too – the brand recently became a B Corp and set a target of zero materials sent to landfill by the end of 2023. Good stuff. au.kowtowclothing.com



rubik's cute

Any kid who solved a Rubik's cube without peeling off the stickers always had our utmost respect. If you were once that child genius, perhaps you'd appreciate **Journey Of Something's** floral art cube. For \$20, it'll have you twisting and turning in style. journeyofsomething.com



under the sea

Does your heart swell with joy at the sight of a **Ken Done** painting? How about at 112 pages of his all-out colourful, ocean-inspired works? Don't answer. Just race over to frankie.com.au/win where we're giving away five copies of Ken's hardcover minibook, *Reef*. Each book is worth \$25 and can also be nabbed from shop.kendone.com.au



here, chooky chooky!

You are indeed staring at a coupla cheeky chooks, handmade by a crafter named Wilson, who resides in Cape Town, South Africa. Wilson makes these fun little guys from found plastic bags and sells them at traffic lights around town – and now online through Melbourne shop **Pan After**. \$18 from panafter.com.au



green with envy

Some days call for dainty, pretty shoes. Other days call for chunky-soled platforms that make you feel capable of crushing your worst enemies underfoot. These **Obus** Wayfarer platform sandals (\$259 from obus.com.au) are more of the latter. And while they're perfectly fit for arse-kicking, they're also comfy enough for all-day walking.



a little chat with... little guilt

What's the story behind your EP title, *I Do Everything Around the House*? Ella Melton: My boyfriend Rhys and I always bicker about who does more housework. When the band records demos, there's always a minute of talking before we start playing. There's audio of Rhys shouting, "I do everything around the house!" at the start of our single "Nowhere". We wanted the EP name to reflect the theme of self-respect, and in a way, "I do everything around the house" is a metaphor for that. **What's the weirdest experience you've had together?** Joe Knowles: We were all chilling before a gig and a magician came up to us out of the blue. He did some insane magic tricks then disappeared in the flash of an eye. That's when I realised my wallet was missing. Brady also lost his keys that night. Fortunately, the wallet was under the table and the keys were in Brady's car. **When was the last time you felt a little bit guilty?** Lachlan 'Mop' Thompson: I haven't been the person who's paid for the last six Ubers that I've caught, so I feel guilty right now. **Tell us about the EP artwork.** EM: It's an oil painting by Melbourne artist Libby Haines. We found her on Instagram. Her artistic style is classy and funky, and it fits in with the homely theme of our EP. She sent over the actual painting on a canvas, which you can now find in our producer's studio.



wavy baaby

These two-toned togs (\$240 for the set) are making us feel rather Zen. Perhaps it's the yin-yang-esque design, or simply the knowledge that they'll be worn at the beach. Either way, we'll be nabbing a pair from baaby.com.au. Feeling lucky? There's also a set up for grabs at frankie.com.au/win



get stuffed

Basically every culture has its own version of a dumpling. So, depending on how you want to look at it, this here cushion could be a Polish pierogi, Japanese gyoza or Chinese jiaozi (mmm, we're suddenly very hungry). You'll find it at enjoypillows.etsy.com for around \$56.



the artist and his sausage

Ever caught yourself daydreaming while waiting for your hot dog to cook? "What would it feel like to be a shiny meat sack, floating in a body of water?" you wonder as the pot bubbles over. Well, here's your chance to find out. Kind of. New York artist **Jon Burgerman** has designed this floatie in collaboration with **Third Drawer Down**, meaning that, for \$60, you can slide into a pool and finally achieve your meaty dreams. thirddrawerdown.com



get to know our cover artist, janelle burger

Hi Janelle, tell us a bit about yourself. Bonjour! I'm based in a Parisian suburb full of people with tiny dogs, bakeries on every corner and cute parks. My typical day starts with a banana smoothie and I'll watch a news livestream before I start work for the day. At night, I'm either watching TV, doodling on my iPad, studying French or playing chess online. **Tell us about the making of this cover.** I really took a trip down memory lane to my childhood, when I'd walk home from primary school, smelling eucalyptus trees, picking bottlebrush and Geraldton waxflowers, but not picking kangaroo paws because they're too good for that. I combined florals and Indigenous patterns throughout the cover. The arches actually represent people, so the cover could be us Australians living in our floral paradise. **What do you enjoy drawing most?** Portraits of strong women mostly, but recently I've gotten into drawing scenes from cafés. Probably because I'm always hungry. **What do you listen to when you're drawing?** I've made a '90s playlist, so a lot of tunes from my teen years. **What do you do when you're in need of inspiration?** I'll do things that make me happy, like go to a museum, take my bike out, get lost in Paris, watch old movies from my childhood or talk to friends about their recent creative projects. **What can we find you doing on a Sunday?** Watching a French television show called *Très Très Bon*. It's a group of food journalists going out to all types of cafes, restaurants and bakeries. **Where can we see more of your work?** You can catch me on Instagram at @janelleburger.



who's a good bobbin?

Want to make a crafter cry out with glee? Gift them a novelty craft supply like these dachshund bobbins from pipandchip.etsy.com. Their official purpose is to keep embroidery floss tangle free, but they also happen to supply a great deal of cuteness and joy. A set of 12 pups costs around \$22.



alexander's dolls

If you're interested in post-war design and architecture (smarty pants), you probably already know who **Alexander Girard** is. The legendary New Yorker passed away in 1993, but his big archive of work lives on today, including in the form of these decorative wooden dolls. You can spy the full range of funny faces at outregallery.com



creative juice

If only we could order a shot of **Yan Yan Candy Ng's** 'instant creative juice' at our local café. We'd surely be able to overcome even the worst cases of creative block. But alas – Candy's juice only comes in the form of this cheery enamel keyring, which can be acquired from shop.qvwc.org.au for 35 bucks.



you're soy cool

Ah, Bonsoy. We're so grateful for the creaminess you add to our daily lattes without wreaking havoc on our dairy-intolerant tums. The fashionable types at **Into Carry** are appreciative, too. You see, they've repurposed your old packaging into a bag (\$140 from intocarry.co) and it's very swish. They've also passed on two bags to give away at frankie.com.au/win



make a splash

We took one look at **You Swim's** latest campaign and immediately wanted to tear off our clothes and sprint towards the ocean. That's how you want to feel come summer – not all stressy over whether last year's togs will fit. The nice (and kind of wild) thing about **You Swim** is that its ribbed-fabric designs (\$189 each) fit seven sizes in one (from size 6 to 18), which means each pair can adapt to a changing body. Hallelujah! youswim.com



pip'd dream

OK, try not to freak out. This is a ceramic vase masquerading as a leaning tower of piped icing, and yes, absolutely everything about it is REALLY FREAKING AWESOME. It's by Sydney artist **Ebony Russell** (aka **Pip'd Dream**), and goes for \$120 at pinkysstore.com



chuffed skates x ashley chitty

Saving up for a new pair of roller skates? Consider these suede mustard beauties from **Chuffed Skates**. Co-designed by Indigenous skater **Ashley Chitty** and lined with art by **Kamsani Bin-Salleh**, the 'Birak' skate is named after the first summer season on the Noongar boodja calendar. Plus, \$10 from each sale of these very special skates will be donated to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. \$449 from chuffedskates.com



happy day people

We could all do with a few more giggles in our day. That's why **Angela and Claudia Senserrick** – the mother-daughter duo behind Melbourne brand **Happy Day People** – make pop culture and nostalgia-inspired homewares like these Kath Day and Kel Knight tea towels (\$27 each). If you're a hunk of spunk or a hornbag with a sense of humour and an empty tea towel rail, then you know where to go. happydaypeople.com.au



funky fun you

Gifting jewellery is rather tricky (pick the wrong thing and you'll forever be judged), but if your intended recipient is a maggie for all things colourful and bright, chances are they'd enjoy a sparkly DIY earring kit (\$69) from **Funky Fun You**. Each kit comes with enough cute bits and bobs to make 6–8 dangles. funkyfunyou.com



hanging out with... becca hatch

What's one song you've had on repeat lately? "Sing It Back (Boris Dlugosch Mix)" by Moloko. I've been diving into a lot of classic disco and house tracks and this one really resonated with me. It always makes me feel good! It's also one of the tracks that influenced my single, "Blessed". **Favourite gig you've played this year?** The show I played at Phoenix Central Park. It was the first time I've ever headlined my own show, let alone one of the first times I've played with a live band. I felt I really stepped into myself as Becca Hatch the performer/artist. **What's one thing not many people know about you?** How much I love playing video games and that I stream on Twitch. I'm pretty good at *Call of Duty: Warzone* – I think I could give a lot of guys a run for their money. My current favourite video game is *Stray* because of how beautiful it is and because you literally get to play as a cat. **When do you feel most creative?** My old answer would've been during the late hours of the night, but now it's during the day, after a good night's rest and some food. **What themes often appear in your music?** My songs are usually inspired by people or events that shaped the way I feel about myself. **Where would you like to be in five years' time?** I want to be the CEO of my own multinational business that helps other young creatives bring their big ideas to life and helps other Mob and people of colour who want to use their talent to earn their living.



blissful frocks

Even if you live a life of pure chaos, there's no reason why your wardrobe can't emanate chill, free-flowing vibes. Coastal New South Wales-based **Daughters of India** is the kind of label you can turn to for breezy, vintage-tinged dresses, made from Indian handblock-print fabrics. Every design projects pure contentedness. #blessednotstressed daughtersofindia.net



a helping hand

Paws up if you'd like your dining table to look especially cute this holiday season. Whoa – no need to punch the air so aggressively, pal! **Maison Balzac** has you covered with its handy pink-and-coral napkins. You can get your digits on a set of four for \$119 at maisonbalzac.com



double date

Sisters **Alice and Bridget Wald** have pretty much always been joined at the hip, so going into business with each other this year was a no brainer. Together, the pair are **Double Date**, a homewares brand peddling colourful mobiles and shapely mirrors. Prices start at \$120, and there's plenty more to eyeball at doubledate.com.au



old crafts live on

Well, this is cool. Ballarat, Victoria, is now home to the **Australian Centre for Rare Arts & Forgotten Trades** – a place where specialised pursuits such as leadlighting, medieval-style metalworks, leather-plaiting, carving, dyeing, locksmithing, weaving and chair-making take place. The whole idea is to preserve and share these rare trades: artisans from around Australia get a space to work for a while, and curious members of the public get a chance to learn from them. If you're keen to get your hands dirty, stop by raretradescentre.com.au to check out the full program of workshops.



five questions with... illustrator srishti guptaroy

How did you end up on the creative path? I grew up in a Bengali family in Kolkata. For us, art, music and dance are almost a rite of passage – it is pretty much mandatory that you be enrolled in some classical art form when you're a kid. **How did your illustration career kick off?** I was working as a fashion designer for a corporate company, making the most generic clothing, and was putting illustrations up on Instagram on the side. It took off when I started making humorous, relatable things. I also had this epiphany where I realised that the screenshot album on my phone was just runway images and memes. I thought it'd be cool to combine these two different ideas. **How'd you settle on your style?** I've always been the person who likes colour, pattern and things that are 'too much'. I want somebody to look at the artwork and two days later discover five new things. **Dream project?** I'm putting this out into the universe: I would love to work with Gucci. Honestly, they could approach me to design toilet paper in their store. **Any advice for young artists?** Even if you feel like your art is not at that point where you want it to be, just put it out there. We're living in an economy where you don't know who will discover your work or when, so just start putting it out there unapologetically. *We caught up with Srishti at the Adobe Max creative conference. Read the full interview at frankie.com.au.*



shy talaga

So, you're the type who's tough-as-nails on the outside and soft-as-marshmallows on the inside? You can try all you like to be broody and mysterious, but we're willing to bet you'd show your softer side if it meant being able to cosy up to one of **Shy Talaga's** barb cushions. Like you, these cushions are equal parts badass and cuddly, and they'll set you back \$180. shyatalaga.com



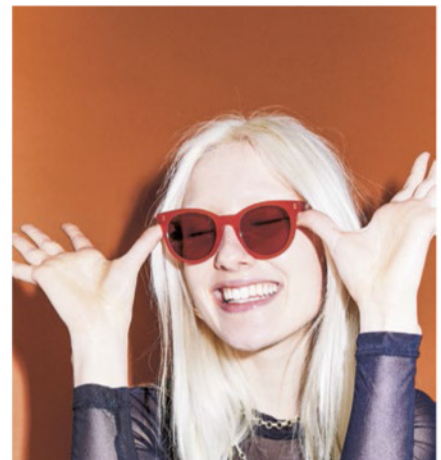
sip sip

File this smiling dolphin cup under 'wholesome homewares'. The sweet graphic is by **Lukas "Big Dipper" Di Pietrantonio**, an artist who also sings, dances and writes about his autistic brain. Lukas is part of **LOOM**, a local not-for-profit that represents artists with a disability, and you can find his 'Cute mug' for \$20 at shop.loom.org.au



status anxiety

"I just want a small bag that goes with everything, but also fits my phone and wallet." Say no more, friend, we've got a daily carrier that fits the bill. It's called the Plunder, and it's by perennial frankie favourite **Status Anxiety**. With its primo pebble leather and comfy cross-body strap, it's \$189.95 well spent. statusanxiety.com.au



a shaded view

Who among us hasn't slipped on dark-lensed sunnies and instantly felt like a rock star going incognito? If you had shades as bitchin' as this **Radical Yes** pair (\$229 from radicalyes.com.au), you'd probably be waltzing around pretending to be Bob Dylan, too.



lucky clover

Researchers say the odds of finding a four-leaf clover are one in 10,000, but begin your search at madebytomo.bigcartel.com and you'll quickly encounter **Kimberley Han's** crocheted Lucky Clover brooch (\$5). We're not sure whether yarn clovers bring the same amount of luck as wild varieties, but we're willing to put the theory to the test. Who knows? Maybe it'll even help us find a real-life five or six-leaf clover (the rarest and luckiest of the lot!).



frankie diary and calendar

A new year is upon us, folks, and to mark its arrival, you might like to treat yourself to some sweet new stationery. We created the frankie 2023 diary with illustrator **Ngaio Parr** to celebrate the best of Australia's seasons. The yellow cloth-bound beauty (rrp \$32.95) is a weekly planner, and also includes a handy budgeting page at the beginning of each month. Meanwhile, the frankie calendar (rrp \$32.95) has 12 mood-lifting artworks to see you through the year (each artwork can also be torn out and framed!). See more at frankie.com.au/shop



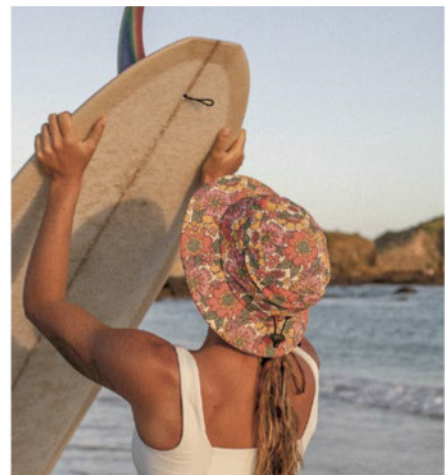
all right, mate

Australian lingo is truly remarkable. Where else can you utter the totally vague phrase "Yeah, nah" and make perfect sense? Another thing that makes perfect sense: this mug by Sydney ceramicist **Bea Bellingham**. It's \$45 at beabellingham.com



carry-on goodies

Travelling is the best; packing your suitcase blows (especially when your shampoo explodes mid-flight). Tassie brand **Beauty and the Bees** is trying to make the latter less sucky with its travel-sized solid soap, moisturiser, shampoo and conditioner bars. Zero plastic and zero risk of spillage is a winning combo to us. beautyandthebees.com.au



sunward bound

Surfer types know: when you're catching waves all day, you need sun protection that'll survive a wipe out. Enter **Sunward Bound**. The local brand's styles are made specifically for surfers and feature a sturdy neoprene chin strap and harder brim (plus some heckin' cute prints). They go for \$69 at sunwardbound.com.au. Alternatively, try your luck for one of four at frankie.com.au/win

Your Summer Gifting, Sorted



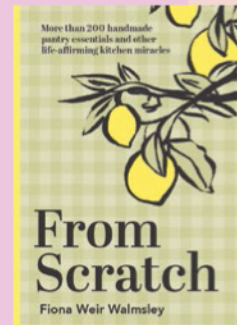
Fun and contemporary crochet patterns to accessorise your home and life for years to come.



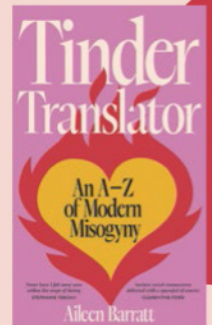
It's time to start sewing your dream wardrobe with these gorgeous pattern-free, size-inclusive projects from DIY Daisy.



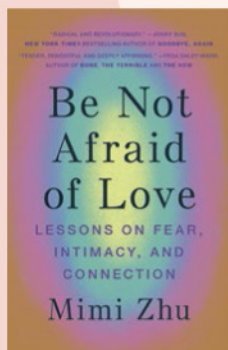
Light up your life with this colourful guide to candle making, featuring 25 projects for beautiful candles and candleholders.



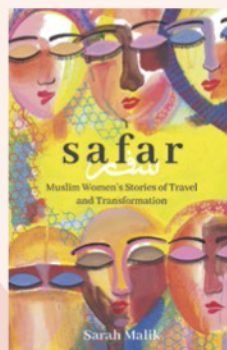
A joyful collection of over 200 'from scratch' recipes that your pantry (and loved ones) will thank you for.



The perfect gift for anyone who has ever felt like they've been sent into the online dating wilderness without a guide.



A stunning selection of interconnected essays exploring human strength and the power of re-learning love.



A beautifully illustrated book that explores the emotional and spiritual aspects of journeying through a series of insightful interviews with Muslim women.



A confronting, strange, and funny tale of survival. From the author of *Paris Or Die*, this is a book about life, death and reinvention, rendered in exquisite prose.



Ultimate Travel Series

These bestselling wanderlust-fuelled travel guides lift the lid on Australia's greatest getaways, wineries, road trips and adventures.



who, what, when, where, why, how
with... downgirl

Who's your dream dinner party guest? Lou Harbidge: PJ Harvey. She got me through first loves and heartbreaks. I heard that while recording *Rid of Me* she ate nothing but potatoes, so she'd be easy to cook for. I'd cook potato three ways: jacket potato topped with creamy mash and crispy skins. **What's one song you wish you'd written?** Alex Neville: "Fade Into You" by Mazzy Star. I (not so) secretly love country music and would love to have served the world with such a melodic, heart-wrenching track. **When did you realise you wanted to start a band together?** Kristen Adams: When our band BOYSLUB hung up its hat, Lou, Skar and I didn't know what the hell we were going to do next. Then, like a glorious golden goose, Alex fell out of the sky and into our Google drives. **Where do you like to write music?** LH: In the rehearsal studio. I love being in the room with the girls, with each of us throwing ideas around. When it all comes together, there's no feeling like it. **Why the name DOWNGIRL?** LH: We had a growing list of names to choose from. One of my favourites was She's All Brat, but for reasons I cannot comprehend, the girls weren't into it. The winning name was taken from *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* by Kate Manne – a philosophical text which argues that misogyny should be seen at a societal level, not simply an individual one. **How does your personality come across in your music?** KA: We're all little gremlins at heart and you can hear that in our music. A lot of our lyrics are tongue-in-cheek, as well. You've gotta have a bit of comic relief through all the heavy emotion, ya know?



hippo season

There are two types of people in the world: those who will absolutely lose their shit over ornamental salt and pepper shakers, and those who will wrinkle their noses at the sight. But the truth is, anyone who doesn't want a pair of tea-sipping hippos seasoning their food is missing out. Pick up this duo for \$40 at hands.com.au



khòlò

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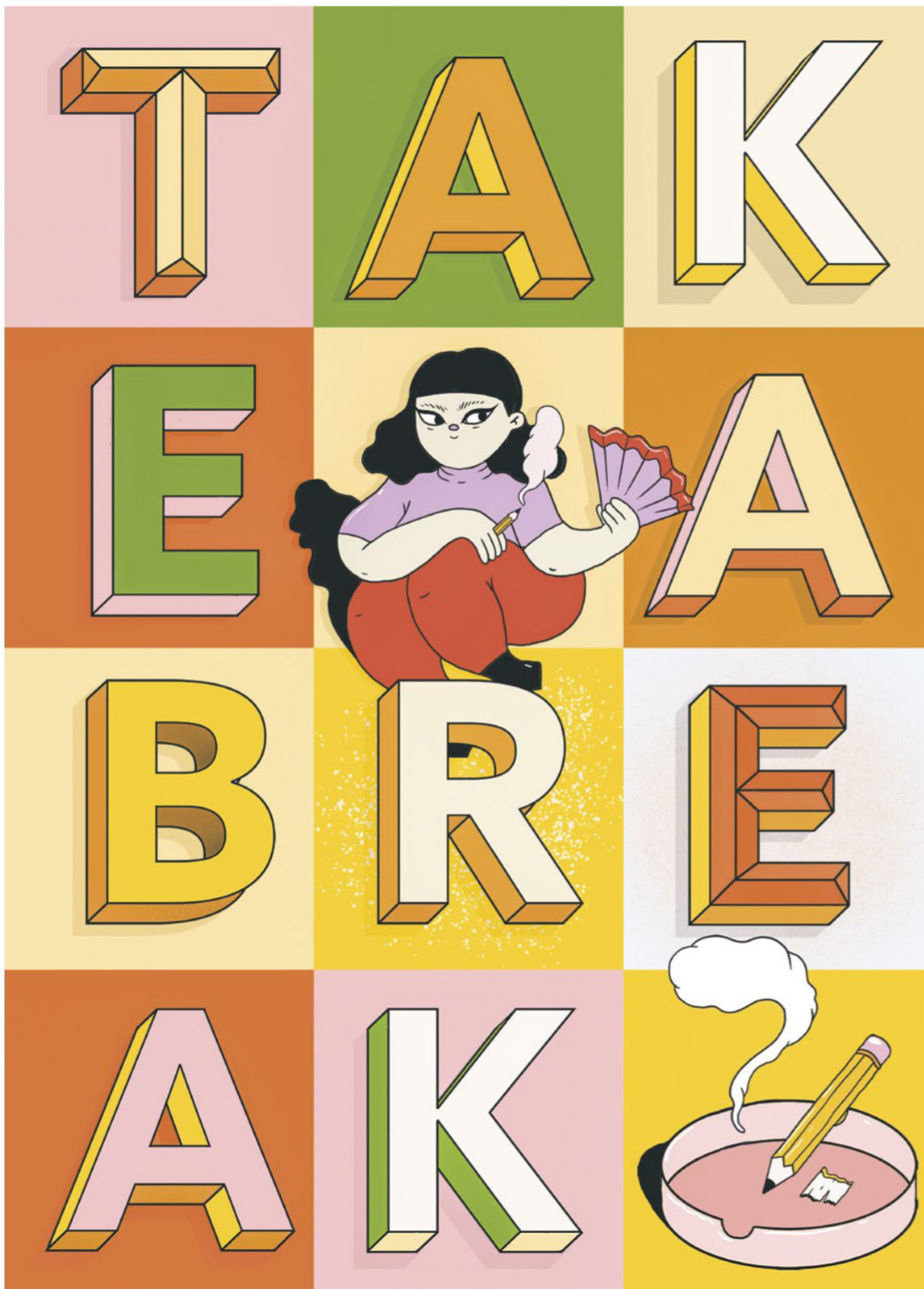
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JANUARY

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	NOTES
						new year's day	
30	31					01	
02	03	04	05	06	07	08	
09	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
			national public holiday				
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	

FEBRUARY

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	NOTES
		01	02	03	04	05	
issue 112 on sale							
06	07	08	09	10	11	12	
	valentine's day						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28						





homebodies

rachael delaney lives in a
converted truck in byron bay.

INTERVIEW ALEX WARREN PHOTOS NATALIE MCCOMAS

Can you please tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do? I live on a sweet slice of land out the back of Byron with my pup Banjo, and two horse friends, Poppy and Delilah. I moved up here as soon as I finished school to get away from the city and to learn to farm, and lived in a few different places before this. I've always found such peace in nature and around animals.

I have my own veggie plot here, where I grow food for myself and sell veggie boxes to locals, and I'm about to dive into studying equine-assisted therapy. Horses have always been part of my own healing journey, so I would love to share that gift with others.

How did you get the idea of living on the back of a truck? I always wanted to build my own house and I've always loved making use of small spaces. I thought, someday, maybe I'd have a little piece of land to build my dream home on, and thought about using shipping containers or a trailer, but was always open to ideas.

To be honest, the truck was a pretty spur-of-the-moment decision that I will never regret. The little 1980 Toyota Dyna popped up on Gumtree for a price I couldn't resist; a friend checked it out for me and gave it the thumbs up. It drives like a dream, and was only ever used as a fruit-picking truck. It came with a big crate on the back – they would drive up and down the fruit orchard, harvesting the fruits and throwing them into it. It had a hardwood tray that I sanded back and it's now my solid floor.

Could you drive a truck before you got yours? I still can't! It terrifies me, to be honest.

Had you ever built anything before? I've built bits and bobs over time. I love feeling handy and also love the challenge of figuring out shapes and lengths and sizes. I'd built a lot with natural materials like hemp and cob.

Did you have an idea of what your ideal little house would look like? I've constantly dreamt of my ideal home – I'm a triple Cancerian. Home is very important to me; the idea of having my own place after moving from house to house was so appealing. And to only have to drive off if I ever needed to move – no packing required!

Where did you get all the materials? I searched around for a couple of months before we started the build, and was pretty lucky as there were some awesome, secondhand, recycled building material shops close by. I was constantly on the lookout for different features. The French windows were from an old fella's garage in Billinudgel – he collected beautiful vintage items. The camphor laurel benchtop was from a local timber mill; camphor is a pretty invasive weed around these parts, but the timber has the most beautiful grain. I also do paintings on timber as well, so included some of those in the internal cladding. Out the front are pot plants – it's a wild food and flower forest mess that I harvest from most nights for dinner. I just let them do their thing.

Did anyone help you build it? I remember buying the truck and thinking, "I wish Dan was around to give some tips and tricks." He's an old friend from school who is very handy and creative and always up for an adventure. I got a call from him the following week: "Hey, Rach, I'm coming up north for a few months!" He needed a place to roll out his swag and I needed a roomie and so it all flowed perfectly. We had the truck ready to live in within three months, with the deadline of my birthday.

What skills and lessons did you learn along the way? Pilot-hole drilling – my boyfriend will laugh at me for that one. Be careful where you store your precious glass windows – I lost about five to breakage, so learnt the hard way. It wasn't fun cleaning all the shards of glass up either. I also learnt very creative ways of climbing onto the roof.





“to be honest, the truck was a pretty spur-of-the-moment decision that i will never regret. the little 1980 toyota dyna popped up on gumtree for a price i couldn’t resist.”

Can you tell us about the inside of your place? I loved taking my time with the interior when the rest of the build was finished. I lived in the empty truck for a couple of months to discover what I really needed. I had always dreamt of my bookshelf window and was so excited to finally put it together. When you lie on the mat and take a book off the shelf to read, you can look out into the trees and feel cosy in the corner. The entire kitchen took time, as I discovered how it could all work for me. The camphor benchtop is oiled with beeswax, which smells delightful. The raw legs holding it up were inspired by a friend’s creation.

I love clothes, so made sure my wardrobe was big enough to house them all, though I did do a big cull before I moved in. My ‘bathroom’ cabinet was a gift from my boyfriend to keep all my lotions and potions, with a mirror on the front which I realised was quite handy after living without one for a long time, and going to work with mascara running down my face. I’m still constantly adding hooks as new needs arise – they’re so handy.

Do you have to keep culling belongings, or are you past that? My boyfriend lived with me for a year and kept anything he thought might be useful in the near or distant future, including five broken bikes, endless building materials, ropes, tin, pots etc, which drove me mad ‘cause I like to keep things very minimal and simple. Safe to say, when he moved out, everything moved, too. Back to the necessities for me.

Can you talk about some of the practical aspects of living in your place – like cooking and having a shower? The kitchen is always a main focus of mine wherever I live. I love cooking and baking with fresh produce. My little kitchen takes up half the space; I have a portable gas oven and stove, plenty of shelving for all my dry stores and plenty of bench space for chopping. I don’t have electricity or running water hooked up yet (or maybe never, I like keeping things simple). There’s a cold outdoor shower among the trees, and a fire bath out the front that we built in case I feel like soaking in warm water after a hard day at work in winter. We also built a simple compost toilet out the back.

Best things about living on the back of a truck? Freedom; simplifying; a place for everything and everything in its place.

Any downsides to it? Going outside in the rain to pee. Trying to make friends with the wind in the big gum trees that tower over us.

What’s it like at different times of the year? I love feeling the seasons change. I feel like it’s really important for our bodies to move with them. In saying that, I’m pretty lucky, as in this subtropical climate we have only about two weeks of real cold and the rest is totally manageable. The truck is also very well insulated, and I’ve parked it in a spot that gets just the right amount of sunlight for all seasons.

What are people’s reactions when they hear where you live? I think people are pretty surprised at how it really feels like a comfortable little home. But a compost toilet and cold shower isn’t for everyone.

Can the truck still go – where would you like to take it? She sure can! I’ve been playing with the idea of moving recently. It’s coming up to two years of being on this land and I’ve been thinking about heading south.

Can you imagine yourself ever living in a regular house? Sometimes it’s nice to dream of the comforts of a warm shower and a fridge. But I really love the feeling of indoor/outdoor living, of being at one with the elements, and the amount of fresh air. I would love to build a family house at that stage of my life, but I’ll make sure it still has plenty of windows and light seeping through, and plants all around. ✨



Rachael’s sweet abode is featured in SPACES Volume Six, a collection of homes from around Australia where creative people live, work and play. Order a copy online at frankie.com.au/spaces6, or find a stockist at frankie.com.au/find







colour me happy

TAKE A GANDER AT EMILY VAN HOFF'S QUILTED WALL HANGINGS.

You're a trained graphic designer. How does that part of your brain influence your textile work? It's the engine behind all of my work, and quilting and embroidery are the tools I'm currently using to bring my designs to life. I enjoy graphic design – it's a skill I've put a tonne of work into over the years, but the hands-on, tactile creating is what really brings me joy. That marriage of digital and analog is where the magic happens for me.

What has led you up to this moment? I've always made things, but it was often partially motivated by what I thought people might like or what might sell. After my husband died unexpectedly in early 2020, followed by the loss of my job due to the pandemic, I allowed myself to make whatever I truly wanted, without any outside pressure. Of course, the things I was most excited about ended up being exciting to many other people as well. My own personal explorations expanded into what my work is today.

How did you learn quilting and sewing? I've been sewing for as long as I can remember, starting with impossibly tiny, felt stuffed animals. It's been a combination of learning basics where I could, teaching myself and just sort of collecting textile hobbies over the years. I once taught myself tatting on YouTube, which is a fantastic useless skill.

How does one of your wall hangings come together? It always starts as a digital design – Adobe Illustrator is my best friend. I then reproduce the design in real life with lots of precise cutting, piecing and quilting. They usually start out larger than the final design and are cut down to my shapes. The actual creation of each wall hanging is around 10–12 hours, and designing and choosing colours takes as long as they take.

How do you decide on the colours? Colour doesn't come very naturally to me. It takes a lot of trial and error, and it usually ends up taking a sharp turn from where I thought I was headed.

You also apply your needlework skills to clothing and accessories. Do you have a favourite medium to work on? I love them all for different reasons. Clothes are fun because people will take them out into the world to be appreciated by whoever they see that day, rather than hanging in a gallery or a home where only a select few see it.

How has your relationship to craft changed since opening up your shop? Making things is definitely therapeutic. I love the tedious and repetitive nature – it's nice to just be in the flow and have a beautiful thing to show for my time. Now that it's also my income, it is a bit of a different relationship, but I do try to make sure I still have time to just make whatever I feel like for the joy of it.

How do you want your work to make people feel? I want my work to be joyful and unexpected and beautiful – I hope people can feel that!

Where can we see more? Online at emilyvanhoff.com or on Instagram at [@emilyvanhoff](https://www.instagram.com/emilyvanhoff). ✨





no chill

A LITTLE CHAT WITH JACK SUMMERS AND MAISIE EVERETT FROM MELBOURNE PUNK TRIO CLAMM.

Interview **Emma Do**

What's CLAMM's origin story? Jack Summers: Miles (Harding) and I started playing together in other bands before CLAMM. I had the urge to create something that was a little more cathartic and meaningful; I wanted a way to express more angry thoughts I was having as I was getting older. Maisie joined as our bassist shortly after our first album.

Describe CLAMM's sound. JS: CLAMM's music is so intense – it makes you feel like you can say whatever you want even if it is intense, because that intensity is going to be matched by the music. Maisie Everett: All the music we play is pretty fast. It's very adrenaline-filled.

Tell us a cute story about the first-ever song you wrote. JS: Miles' dad is a musician, so Miles and I have been playing music together for a pretty long time, since we were eight or nine. Our first song was about protecting the squirrel monkeys. We made a rap about it.

What vibe does each band member bring? ME: I feel like Jack is turbo and not chill, but in a good way. And then Miles and I bring the chill. JS: Maisie's analysis is pretty spot-on.

How does the music come together for you? ME: It's one of those things that is hard to reflect on because you don't think about it

at the time and before you know it, you've got an album of songs. Most of our songwriting is quick – we usually have an idea while at band practice. JS: Sometimes we'll just be messing around in between practising songs and find something good. And then I go away and write lyrics. I paint outside of music, and it's interesting how art and music feed into each other. Art school really informed my attitude towards songwriting – it's about knowing when to stop, because it's so easy to overcomplicate things.

What subjects do you find yourself returning to? JS: I've tended to write from a place of frustration or anger. And just discontent for this strange system and way of living. The cost of living; the amount we're expected to work. It seems like people struggle to connect with family and friends when they do 40-hour weeks in order to just live. People aren't happy and that's why I think some people can relate to our music. People might not get to interact or express that anger in a healthy way but maybe they can in our music. Holding on to that anger, really feeling that anger, and honouring that anger – it's in you, and that's OK – and then letting it go. That's when anger turns to pride. That's my experience with writing music for CLAMM.

How do you rev up a crowd? ME: Jack has this new move that he's been doing for a little while now, where he crouches with his guitar, right after he shouts something into the mic. And for some reason people love it. JS: In the first band Miles and I were in, we used to read weekly horoscopes over a song. We'd play a song and I'd stand there intuitively reading certain lines like, "In order to forget you must forgive," and I'd just keep saying it again and again and people would be like, "Whoa!"

What would you be doing if you weren't playing music? ME: I just can't say. I have no idea. JS: I don't think I'd be in the city, that's for sure. I'd be on a farm somewhere. I think I'd just paint. ✿

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going, going, gone

BUYING AND SELLING STUFF ON THE SECONDHAND MARKET IS A PAIN, BUT EMILY NAISMITH CAN'T STOP.

Hi Emily, is this still available? Those six words strike fear in my cold, dead heart. Yes, Janice. It technically *is* still available because Dareen was the first to message me about the chipped dinner set I've been using for upwards of eight years, but he's gone quiet and I've also got Hannah, who's technically in line before you too, telling me she can come before she drops the kids at soccer on Wednesday. But honestly Janice, I'm willing to face the wrath of Dareen if you just come and take these goddamn plates and bowls off my front porch today.

The dinner set stayed on the porch for four days before Dareen picked it up. Such is the life of a Facebook Marketplace seller. I had listed it for free to get it out of my life quickly and easily, but honestly, I needed to employ an administrative assistant to ensure those six bowls, eight plates and five mugs exited my consciousness (and premises) permanently.

I love the idea of online secondhand marketplaces because they reduce the amount of stuff going to landfill and help you spend less money, but there's so much pain involved sometimes that I wonder if it's worth it.

Selling on Depop caused me anxiety spasms, the magnitude of which I'd not felt since my year-seven classroom's 'getting to know you' activity, which involved ripping off the amount of toilet paper you use when you take a shit and telling the room a fact about yourself for each square. You see, I sold a skirt to two different people. One skirt. Two people paid for it and I was sitting pretty with a flush PayPal account and cheeks alight with flames. Am I committing fraud? Am I going to jail? I had to refund one of them, and if there's anyone who's going to be seething at me (rightly so), it's a fellow fashion fiend who thinks she's just nabbed a bargain, only to have it ripped out of her bare hands minutes after. I had to come to peace with the fact I made a mistake. I didn't sleep for two nights.

Selling generally sucks, but on the other hand, I've found some of my favourite possessions on Gumtree and Marketplace. Top spot goes to four '90s McDonalds chairs, shaped respectively like a pile of cheeseburgers, a packet of fries, Grimace and that weird green character with glasses no one knows the name of. I paid way too much for them, but sometimes you have to offer cash and immediate pick-up, especially if there are questions around how the seller acquired said chairs.

The best thing about online marketplaces is that somehow, the algorithm knows you better than you know yourself. I would never have thought to search for an ottoman that looks like a strawberry – I have absolutely no need for such a thing! But will I cross the city for it at the drop of a hat? Absolutely! Same goes with shoes for my kid where the left shoe looks like a lemon and the right one an orange. I'd die for them.

Ultimately, the pain of online marketplaces is worth it for the payoff (money, convenience, nice treats). So, excuse me while I send this sweet nothing to my next victim: *Hi there, is this still available?* ✨

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i am uyghur

australia's uyghur community is eager to
share the strength of their culture, away from
the chinese government's narrative.

PHOTOS SAM BIDDLE WORDS EMMA DO

For most of her life, Fazilat Shu has given those around her a crash course in Uyghur identity. Not because she's an educator or cultural ambassador, but purely because she stood out in her hometown of Adelaide. "I look different – people can't put me in a box," she says.

When asked about her ethnicity, Fazilat would launch into the basics: Uyghurs are a Turkic ethnic minority group native to north-western China; they are ethnically and culturally different from Chinese people; and their nation enjoyed brief independence before becoming a part of China. Over time, the conversation changed to, "now we're being ethnically cleansed". Constantly explaining her heritage, and the

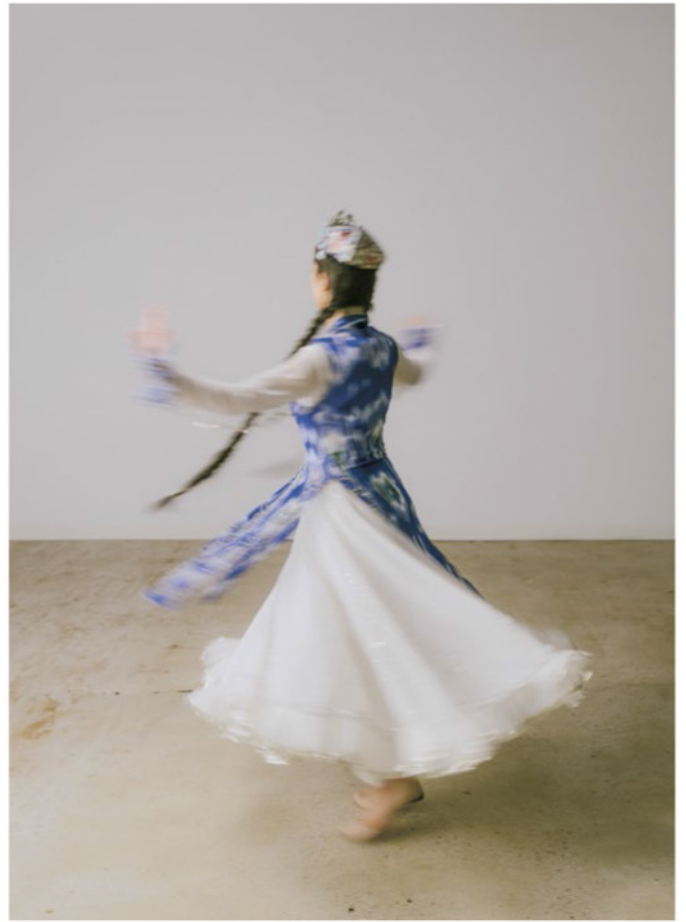
human rights situation in China, took a toll. "It gets really overwhelming," she says.

Fazilat wants to highlight the beautiful parts of Uyghur culture – to show her community's achievements, and that her heritage is more than a news headline. That's the throughline in Melbourne photographer Sam Biddle's visual project, of which she's a part. Sam is currently photographing Uyghurs from different walks of life – including an activist, designer, restaurateur and musician – and simultaneously offering up his skills for the community to tell their own stories. "I'll ask 'How do you want to be photographed? What emotions do you want to show? And very often, it's pride and power,'" Sam says.

"This project is about showing an identity that is not defined by the oppressor, the CCP (Chinese Communist Party), or even the media. It's defined by Uyghur people representing how they want to be seen. Often that is as people fighting and using culture as acts of resistance."

The Chinese government is committing very real, horrifying atrocities against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim minorities in China's Xinjiang province (Uyghurs refer to their homeland as East Turkestan). The most shocking examples include the detainment of more than a million Uyghurs in prison camps since 2017, mass sterilisation of Uyghur women and the use of Uyghur forced labour in various factories around China. →





“

My activism starts with showing the world who we are through our culture. We have such a rich history spanning thousands of years.

In our homeland, Uyghurs are being systematically killed and our ethnic identity is being erased. So as the next generation in the diaspora, we need to be able to know our culture, and become familiar with it to pass it on. That's why I am so passionate about our traditional Uyghur dance as one aspect of our culture. Because if we're not the ones expressing our culture, then who will?"

INTY ELHAM, HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND PERFORMER



“

It's a shame that Uyghurs are being introduced to the world through the actions of our oppressors. But across the generations and borders of the diaspora, our resistance in all its forms defies the oppressor. From my mum's etken chai to boycotts of brands that exploit forced labour – our resistance is not homogenous. Our culture is our power.”

FAZILAT SHU, STYLIST



The Chinese government claims the camps are part of counter-terrorism efforts, but experts agree that the CCP's actions are disproportionate to the actual threat of extremism, which is minor. Under China's 'anti-terror' laws, all Uyghurs can be potential terrorists, simply for practising their culture or religion: Uyghurs are locked up for reasons as arbitrary as having a long beard or a verse from the Qur'an on their phone. Reports show that detainees are forced to study propaganda, learn Mandarin and chant "Long live Xi Jinping", while those who disobey are tortured. Even those outside of camps are constantly surveilled by numerous cameras on the streets and inside mosques. Famous Uyghurs, academics, writers and musicians have disappeared.

For Nadira Yusuf, one of Sam's photography subjects, and the founder of Uyghur Language School Victoria, part of standing up to the horrors back home involves protecting and maintaining the strength of Uyghur culture. "Is the situation really sad? Yes, so sad. But we have years of history; we have beautiful music; beautiful dress; beautiful food," she says. She points to Muqam, a tradition thousands of years old that encompasses music, poetry, song and dance, all of which carry stories of Uyghur life and history. "I want to show the Australian people who we actually are."

Growing up in Adelaide, where the majority of Australia's 5000-strong Uyghur community reside, Fazilat spent her Saturdays at Uyghur language school. She's grateful for her conversational Uyghur skills, but wishes she had more access to her culture. "There are customs my mum will tell me about, but that I haven't actually seen myself," she explains. "There's still so much I don't know about and want to connect with, but I can't, because it hasn't always been safe to go back to my parents' homeland."

Fazilat has been figuring out how to stay connected to culture in her own way: recently, that's been through creating art from Atlas pattern fabric and cooking traditional foods like polo (rice with carrots

and lamb) – "the king of Uyghur dishes". She loves dropping into Melbourne's Uyghur restaurants too, where there's everything from cumin lamb to hand-pulled noodles and special breads on the menu. As she's gotten older, she's realised how much of the culture is already ingrained in her. "Like with hospitality," she says. "When my friends come over, I'll always give them tea and some snacks. I'm not going to let them leave with an empty stomach."

Since 2014, Nadira has been running Melbourne's Uyghur language school. In addition to language classes, the school covers culture, history and geography and holds community events so young people can gather and practise their mother tongue. "When I was back home, I was allowed to study my language all the way up until year 12. But nearly 10–15 years ago, the Chinese government slowly started stopping it," Nadira says. As of 2017, schools across China have been banned from teaching in the Uyghur language. Uyghur families who sent their children to study abroad in Muslim countries have been torn apart by the crackdown. Under her charity Make My Home, Nadira is raising funds for young displaced Uyghur students in Turkey, whose parents have been imprisoned or forced into camps back home.

Nadira arrived in Australia as a refugee in 2004. She'd had a successful career managing hotels in Beijing, but after speaking out against the government's treatment of Uyghur people, she feared for her safety. "It was not safe for everybody speaking in the Uyghur language," she says. "I'm the lucky one." Even now, running her school in Melbourne comes with its challenges: parents are pulling kids out, worried about their chances of going back to China to visit family. "Everybody said, 'Please sister, if COVID lockdown finishes, we want to go home. This language has been banned there – if I send my kids to language school here, I'll be in big trouble,'" Nadira explains.

Though it has intensified recently, Chinese government repression against Uyghurs

is not new – the state has targeted and forced assimilation on Uyghurs for decades. Part of it has to do with controlling resources and trade routes – Xinjiang has China's largest coal and natural-gas reserves – and another with President Xi Jinping's push to make minorities conform to the majority Han-Chinese culture. "China is really scared that Uyghur people will stand up and say, 'This is my country,'" Nadira says. "So they cut everything down. Everybody has lost family, children, wives, husbands. I want the Australian government and Australian people to open their eyes to this."

The Australian parliament rejected a motion to recognise China's actions as genocide, but Fazilat emphasises the power of ordinary Australians. Around 20 per cent of the world's cotton comes from China, and over 80 per cent of that is from Xinjiang (in 2020, researchers found that up to half a million people were being forced to pick cotton in the region). "We can pay attention to where our clothing is coming from," Fazilat says. "We can go to brands we shop with and say, 'Hey, what's your supply chain? Is your clothing linked to forced labour? Is it linked to a whole cultural genocide?'" Even simply doing research and sharing stories can help move the needle, she adds. "There's so much information out there about Uyghurs in comparison to years ago. We can really put that to good use by talking about it. When the war started with Ukraine, you saw it on pretty much every single person's social media. If we're capable of doing that, why are we not doing the same thing for Uyghur people?"

Nadira knows it will take years to gain back the culture that has been lost. "But I always say I am proud to be Uyghur. We have no country, no guns, no money or army. But we've never been scared. We're still here."

See more of Sam's project at sambiddle.xyz and on Instagram at [@biddle.biddle](https://www.instagram.com/biddle.biddle). ❀



“

Being Uyghur is not a tragedy. We are not history. We are not the past. Uyghur women are the present and the future. We are changemakers and creators. For a long time, I lived in fear that because I am a migrant, an Uyghur, a person of colour, I can't do what I want. But I no longer feed that narrative. We have seen pain but we turn that into our power. We will take up spaces in places that we never thought we could.”

DENARA AMAT, FOUNDER OF SEDA COLLECTIVE



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In the Uyghur language, we have a word – mehman-dost – which directly translates to ‘friend of the guest’. Basically what it means is that Uyghur people value being great hosts, to the extent where you would treat strangers as though they are your close friends. In my experience, it embraces the traits of generosity, kindness, and attentiveness. Not only to people, but to the natural world around us. I love this word because I think it encompasses the entire Uyghur culture, and is something I grew up with and will always go back to.

Belonging to the Uyghur Adelaide community is beautiful – if you ever need anything, there are so many people who’ll jump to be there for you and treat you like family, despite their own struggles. That’s the person I’m trying to be.”

SABIRA HASANOFF, HEALTHCARE RESEARCHER







“

In 2014, I opened the Uyghur Language School in Victoria. There are many Uyghur people like me, living in Australia because of persecution in China. I believe one day we will return to East Turkestan and I want our children to speak to their grandparents in their mother tongue. Some people say, ‘You’re dreaming,’ but we need dreams to keep our hope alive.

Many Australians only know what the Chinese government has done to us. When they hear ‘Uyghur’ they imagine people dying and starving. But Uyghurs have a rich culture and history. I want to show the world who we really are.”

NADIRA YUSUF, FOUNDER OF THE UYGHUR LANGUAGE SCHOOL VICTORIA





preschool pocket treasures

MELISSA KASEMAN'S SON TODDLES HOME
WITH STRANGE BITS AND BOBS.

Where'd the idea for this project come from? I started it in April 2015 when I picked up my son Calder and noticed his back pockets stuffed with things. One of the items in his pocket that day was a red thumbtack. That night I decided to photograph the items on our kitchen table. It then became an archive of the tiny magical objects I found in his pockets each day after preschool.

What drew you to capturing this? I've always been interested in photography's capacity to suspend and document moments of transition and change. The magic of childhood is so fleeting, and these objects represent a chapter of boyhood. I like the idea of the photographs being a taxonomy report of a child's imagination. When I started finding these objects it made me see that there is a lot of me in him. I hope he carries the wonderment of discovery throughout his life.

Did these objects come back with any cool stories? One day he brought home a pearl necklace he had found in the play yard. The moment he showed me, I knew it was someone's real treasure.

It became a great life lesson. We talked about how sometimes in life you'll find something you may want to keep, but that it may be really special to the person who lost it, and it's important to figure out who it belongs to so you can return it. He was so chill and enthusiastic about it, and put it back in his backpack to be returned the next day. Later that night, a teacher sent out an email to the parents wondering if anyone had found the necklace. I called her right away and she cried tears of relief. She had received the necklace from her mother and wore it on her wedding day.

How long did you keep up this project for? I kept photographing until it stopped, which was about a year. That phase of collecting objects at school was replaced with bringing home drawings and sculptures Calder had made throughout the day.

How do you feel looking back at these snaps now that your son is older? I'm so thankful I captured this phase of his life. He's 11 now, and loves looking at the photos.

What subjects do you enjoy photographing most? Professionally, I photograph interior architecture. I love the intimacy of being in someone's home; I think of people's domestic interiors as portraits of themselves. I make personal work as well.

What are you working on next? My eyes are always open, and I'm always taking photographs. I let intuition guide me: if I see something that stops me in my tracks, I photograph it. Later I look at the collection of images, and through editing and sequencing I start to see the poetic message they reveal.

Where can we see more from you? Online at melissakaseman.com and on Instagram at [@melissakaseman](https://www.instagram.com/melissakaseman). ❁

SAYING "I DO" TO COUPLES THERAPY

why young couples are giving relationship counselling a go.

WORDS **TARA KENNY** ILLUSTRATIONS **KATE PULLEN**



Pondering a tree change. Investing in anti-wrinkle eye serum. Lopping off long tresses into a chic bob. These are the things you expect to find your peers doing once they hit the big 3-0. So, imagine my surprise when I looked around and observed my friends doing neither – instead, they were committing to couples therapy, of all things!

Like many in my age group, I have dabbled in individual therapy at different points in my life; I am fluent in the therapy lingo of attachment styles and self-care that proliferates on Instagram; and I have even worked at a mental-health organisation. And yet I still associated couples therapy with older married people navigating midlife crises, grown-up kids leaving the nest and tawdry workplace affairs. Weren't we a little young for this?

Jess and her husband (both preferred not to reveal their full name) were 29 and 30 when they sought therapy to help navigate some significant life changes. "My partner and I were discussing opening up our relationship and he wanted us to see a therapist to support us with the process. Also, we had recently moved to a new city and didn't have much support, so it felt like a good thing to do while we were settling in and setting up a new life," says Jess, who is now 33 and a therapist herself.

Ben (not his real name), 31, had never done individual therapy before he and his partner started couples therapy when their relationship was in a rough spot. "Without us really realising or acknowledging it, our relationship had hit a crisis point," he explains. "I'd say a number of factors, including miscommunication and not hearing or properly trusting each other, had led to a sense of built-up resentment between us."

While there is a lack of data about the numbers and demographics of couples in therapy in Australia, Sydney-based counsellor and psychotherapist Melissa Ferrari has noticed an uptick of couples in their 20s and 30s seeking support during her 25 years as a couples therapist. "There's most definitely been a rise," she says. "I think that therapy has been a whole lot less stigmatised. I think that we are opening ourselves up more to understanding the complexities of how the brain works in love."

According to Melissa, a loved-up brain often rejects logic and overlooks red flags that may become apparent once an initial infatuation has faded: "That first six months to two years, people are idealising each other and not noticing flaws. It's like being on cocaine for the first two years!"

Melissa suspects the pandemic has played a role in the rise of couples therapy, too. As individual mental-health issues came to the fore across society, those in relationships were often forced into extremely close quarters (a potential buzzkill even for those still in the honeymoon phase). Many couples hit milestones such as moving in or spending weeks on end together faster than they otherwise would have. Yet, those of us who've witnessed our parents or elders divorce can still feel tentative about major life decisions such as moving in or buying property with a partner, getting engaged or married, or contemplating children. "I'm quite struck by the amount of people who approach me for pre-marriage therapy," Melissa says. "They want to make sure that they're able to resolve conflict and are on the same page."

So what happens in couples therapy? Is it what the movies would have us believe



(an hour of passive-aggressive sniping while a shrink takes notes from a leather armchair)? Ben's experience turned out markedly different from his preconceptions. "I thought couples therapy would be a conversation between us with a therapist playing mediator, which wasn't the case. Instead, it was returning to the root base of both of our ways of responding to situations: how we think, how we operate."

Ben and his partner were only in therapy for just over three months when their therapist told them to go forth, prosper and reach out if they needed support again. But the experience completely altered their dynamic. "I'm more in love now than I was before," Ben says. "Therapy has also allowed us to work through conflict with each other in a healthy, understanding way."

Jess and her partner, who were in therapy for two and a half years, also found it to be a transformative project. "Our experience was very positive, and affected our relationship more profoundly than we expected it to," she says. "Even though we had been together 10 years at the time, therapy helped us get to know each other better, and understand some patterns and vulnerabilities in our relationship."

While both Ben and Jess's forays into couples therapy ended up strengthening their respective relationships, that's not the case for everyone. Melissa puts it bluntly: "Some people come to therapy to break up." Although it's easy to frame therapy that results in a split as a failure, having third-party support can mitigate some of the potential hurt and give both people clarity on their decision.

Realistically, couples therapy is financially out of reach for many folks, especially

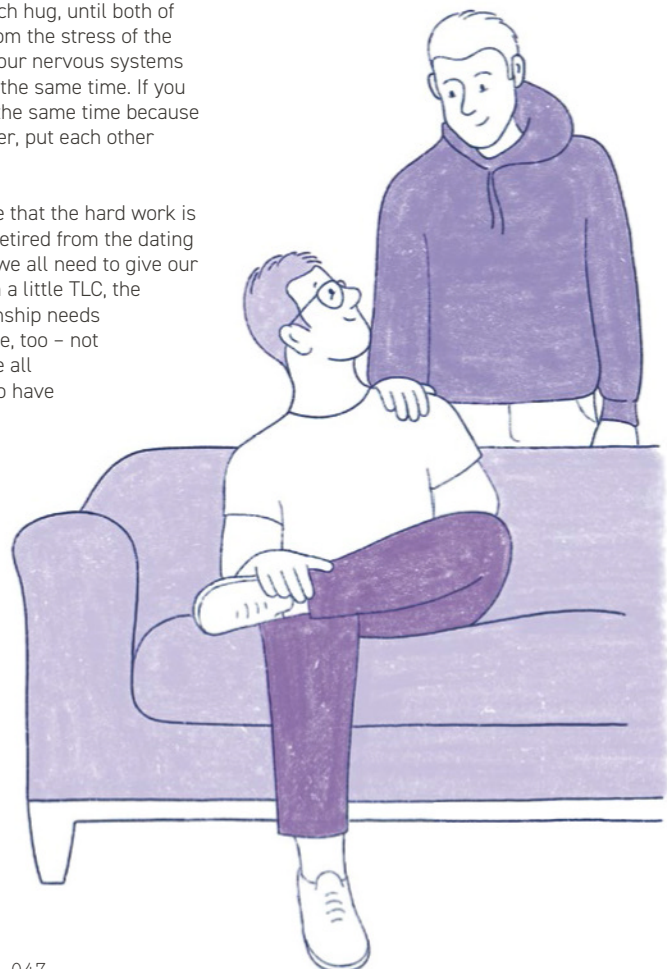
given that it's not included in Medicare's mental health care plan. However, there are other ways to proactively work on a relationship that don't require forking out cash. In addition to Stan Tatkin's book *Wired for Love*, Melissa recommends that couples take a number of small actions.

"Little things like waking up and gazing at each other for a minute or two. Greeting each other at the end of the day with a stomach-to-stomach hug, until both of you are relaxed from the stress of the day. Co-regulate your nervous systems by going to bed at the same time. If you can't go to bed at the same time because of work or whatever, put each other to bed," she says.

It's easy to assume that the hard work is over once you've retired from the dating game. But just as we all need to give our own mental health a little TLC, the health of a relationship needs nurturing over time, too – not only to survive (we all know a couple who have

been together forever yet resent one another), but to thrive. It's never too early (or late) to work on a relationship – be it one with a lover, friend, family member, pet or yourself.

For more information, visit relationships.org.au and Melissa Ferrari's blog at melissaferrari.com.au/blog. ❀



the science of doppelgangers

WHAT EXACTLY ARE THE CHANCES OF FINDING YOUR DOUBLE?

Words James Shackell

Neil Douglas, a photographer from Glasgow, was travelling to Galway, Ireland, in 2015 when he boarded a Ryanair flight and began searching for his seat. To his surprise, there was already a man sitting there.

To his even greater surprise, the stranger turned around and looked exactly, spookily, like him. Same ginger beard, same nose, same teeth, same squinty-eyed smile. It was like slipping into a bizarro shadow world. Neil had just met his doppelganger (or doppelgänger, if you like your German derivatives with the proper umlauts): 35-year-old Robert Stirling. No relation. The two men shared a laugh and took a photo, which quickly went viral and got people wondering, "Is there another me out there?"

Doppelganger literally translates as 'double walker'. The concept has been around for thousands of years, and was traditionally

seen as a bad omen, although these days people seem to get a kick out of meeting their duplicates, like two 20-something guys arriving at a house party in the same shirt. The phenomenon is more common than you might think. Well, sort of. There are only so many ways to construct a human face, after all. On a planet with seven billion people, there must be another you out there, right?

It's not as silly a question as you might think, especially given the popularity of facial recognition software. The whole reason your phone unlocks when it sees your face is because, in theory, there's only one of you. But don't panic and reset your PIN just yet: in recent years, scientists have actually crunched the numbers on doppelgangers, and it turns out the odds of finding your exact replica are vanishingly small.

In 2015, Teghan Lucas from the University of Adelaide analysed nearly 4000 faces, measuring the distance between eyes, noses, earlobes and so on, and found that the odds of you sharing eight characteristics with a total stranger are less than one in a trillion. Even with 7.4 billion people on the planet, that means you've got about a one in 135 chance of having an exact doppelganger. "Before you could always be questioned in a court of law, saying, 'Well what if someone else just looks like him?' Now we can say it's extremely unlikely," Teghan says.

Still, this is a very forensic definition of doppelgangers. Most of us don't need to measure the width of our family's nostrils to pick them out of a line-up. It just happens automatically. We see a face and think, "That's them. That's their face."



It has to do with how our brains categorise and remember people. When we see a face, our brain is actually pulling together all sorts of tiny details – researchers have found we look at the eyes, mouth and nose, in that order – and fusing them into the mental image of a person. The process happens in an area known as the fusiform gyrus. Pieces are stored relative to their connection to other pieces – *that* chin with *those* ears equals King Charles, for example. Kind of like a map of Europe. Recognising a single country's silhouette might be tricky, but we know it in relation to its neighbours.

Still, the fusiform gyrus kind of skips over some of the minor, unimportant details. So while your face may not mathematically align with another, it can still look pretty damn similar. Close enough, in other words. Same hair colour, maybe. Same general head shape. Same jaw line. Same eyes.

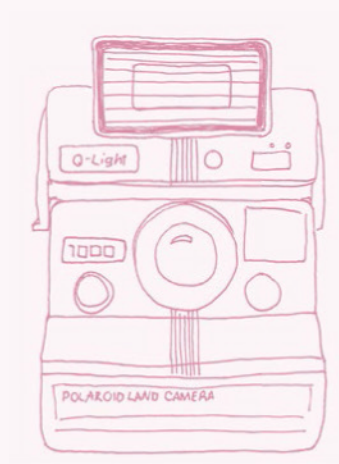
This is why some doppelgangers look alike on first glance, but closer examination makes you think, "Oh yeah, they're clearly two different people." The broad strokes are the same, but the details are ever-so-slightly off. "There are only so many genes in the world which specify the shape of the face, and millions of people, so it's bound to happen," face-perception expert Winrich Freiwald told the BBC in 2016. "For somebody with an 'average' face it's comparatively easy to find good matches."

Of course, all this is totally subjective. Facial recognition isn't an exact science, at least for humans. Researchers estimate that we have about 5000 faces 'stored' in our memory, like some elaborate game of Guess Who?. But some people have trouble recognising *themselves* in photographs, while others never forget

a face; some doppelgangers don't even see the resemblance when confronted with their 'twin'. In other words, what makes an actual doppelganger is hard to define. It's going to be slightly different for everyone, depending on how your brain is wired.

Still, it gets weirder. Studies show that our doppelgangers don't just look like us; the really similar ones even share our DNA. In a 2022 study, Dr Manel Esteller from the Josep Carreras Leukaemia Research Institute in Barcelona gathered 32 pairs of 'lookalikes' and ran some tests. He found that doppelgangers share a good chunk of the same genes, although other factors that determine appearance – like the lived experience of our ancestors, or our microbiome – were not necessarily identical. Basically, doppelgangers share the same flat-pack instruction manual, but sometimes the resulting bookcase is a little wobbly. DNA is only part of the picture, and while genes might bring some strangers together, all the other factors – where they live, what they eat, who their great-great-great-grandmother was – are pulling them apart.

This means that there's no guarantee that your doppelganger will share anything else, other than a face. They can be different heights, different builds, have different hobbies and skills and phobias. It's not like there's a you-shaped clone out there somewhere, looking wistfully up at the same moon and thinking the same thoughts. Doppelgangers are simply an expression of human probability. With that many people in the world, and a finite number of nose shapes, you're eventually going to get two stout, bearded, quite-similar redheads on the same Ryanair flight to Galway. ✿



film photography 101

a beginner's guide to shooting
the old-school way.

WORDS EILISH GILLIGAN ILLUSTRATIONS ALICE BUDA



If you're as old as I am, you might remember your mum giving you a Kodak disposable camera to take to school camp. I remember holding on to my camera like a precious jewel. Even then, I knew that there was something very special about capturing moments on film – even if I can't remember now what moment I was trying to capture in the series of photos with my thumb covering the lens. If it's been a while since you picked up a film camera (or, like me, you never graduated beyond a disposable), these tips, made with expert help from photographer Sarah Pannell, will gently guide you through the process. No pretentious film bros allowed.

WHY SHOOT FILM? In a world where almost everyone has an ultra-HD camera integrated right into their phone, many are looking to film photography for something a bit different. The slow, deliberate ritual of framing a shot, pressing the shutter, then waiting to see the results is a deeply rewarding one. "Aesthetically speaking I prefer the tone and texture you can achieve through shooting film," Sarah explains. "Particularly with colour film, the higher-quality film stocks can be incredibly forgiving and versatile. I've always been drawn to the surprise that comes with the process, although this might not always be practical. I also like the finite nature of film photography; what might seem like a limitation to some, I find value in."

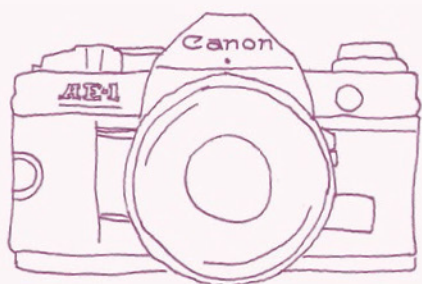
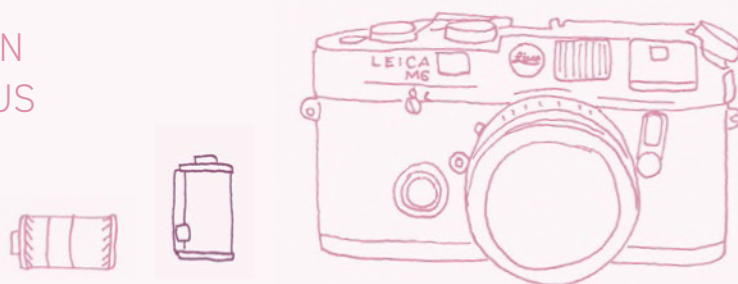
WHERE DO I BUY A FILM CAMERA? While disposable cameras have a fond place in our memories and are a budget-friendly option in the short term, it's probably better to invest in a cheap, small film camera according to Sarah. "Disposable cameras are accessible but are rather wasteful. If you're planning to shoot more than a few rolls, you're better off spending your money on a cheap point-and-shoot which you can reload with film."

Facebook Marketplace and eBay will be your best friends on your search. There are plenty of cameras to choose from, and many listings will also attach images taken on the camera so you can get a feel for the snaps it will produce. You can also look up the camera's make and model online before purchasing, to check what kind of film it takes or if there are any common issues with the product.

Try to purchase from reputable sellers with high ratings – getting a film camera repaired can be tricky and could end up costing more than the camera is worth. Remember, you don't need to spend hundreds of dollars on your first camera. You also don't want to waste expensive film on a broken camera. Sarah reckons you should always test your new purchase with a cheap roll of film first, in case there are any issues.

66

TRY AND SHOOT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DAY WHEN THE LIGHT IS MORE GENEROUS AND CREATES INTERESTING SHAPES, SHADOWS AND REFLECTIONS."



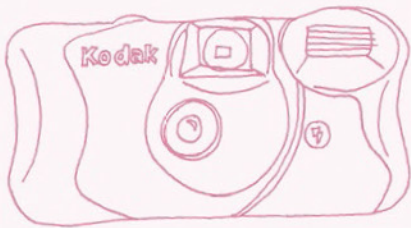
WHAT KIND OF CAMERA SHOULD I GET? In general, there are three different types of film cameras: SLRs (single-lens reflex), rangefinders and compacts. Compacts are your typical point-and-shoot cameras that we mentioned earlier, and while their automated settings make them super-easy to use (they're great for quickly snapping fun, candid moments on holiday), they usually offer less control over how you shoot.

SLRs are bigger, heavier and have interchangeable lenses (depending on what effect you're after, a different lens will help you get there). They also have more options for manual shooting so you'll definitely want to cover the basics before you get your hands on one of these – they're a fair bit more expensive than compacts, too. SLRs give you full control over things like focus, depth of field, shutter speed and more.

Rangefinders sit somewhere between compacts and SLRs, and can have a bit of a steep learning curve to them as they don't really have a digital 'equivalent' like the DSLR. They're smaller than SLRs but have more manual controls than a compact. You might also want to keep in mind the kind of film your camera will take. The most accessible film size is 35mm – more on this later.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT A MANUAL CAMERA? So you're keen to dive into the deep end and go with an SLR or rangefinder film camera. Awesome! There are a few terms you'll want to brush up on first. *Focus* is the sharpest area of the image – you definitely want the main subject of your photo to be in focus. *Aperture* is a hole in your camera's lens that can change shape depending on how much light you want to let in. The *f-stop* is how we measure the camera's aperture, which, when changed, will change your photo's depth of field. *Shutter speed* is exactly what it sounds like: how quickly the camera shutter will close to take the image. A super-fast shutter speed is handy for, say, getting a crisp image of someone running, while a slower speed might create an artistic 'motion blur' effect (but be careful, you could overexpose your film). Your shutter speed determines how much light comes into the camera – too slow and you'll end up with a washed-out, overexposed image; too fast and you'll end up with a darker picture. Knowing the sweet spot for the conditions you're shooting in will take time (this also depends on your film speed).

Sarah says learning on a digital SLR camera can be helpful when practising shooting on manual. "If you have access to one, it can't hurt to practise shooting using manual settings to get your head around aperture and shutter speed."



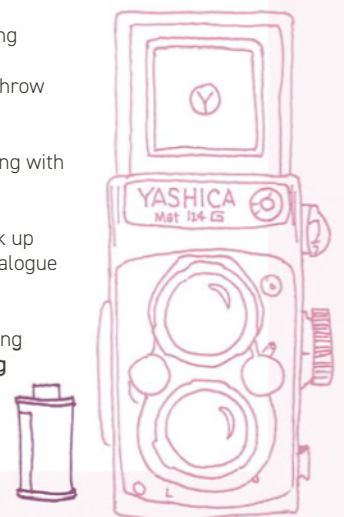
WHAT FILM SHOULD I USE? 35mm film is the most common and the easiest to use. This is a great place to start if you're a beginner. Then there's medium format, which is also known as 120mm film, and large format – but you might want to leave those until you have a bit more experience with shooting 35mm first. Also, loading film in and out your camera can be fiddly, which is another good reason not to splurge on expensive or rare film before you've had a chance to practise. (There are plenty of YouTube tutorials on how to load film into your camera.)

WHAT'S FILM SPEED? Film speed refers to a film's sensitivity to light and is measured with an ISO number. You'll find an ISO number on the film's box, and it should always be noted on online listings, too. Speeds can range from 20 all the way up to 3200 ISO. The higher the ISO number, the more sensitive your film will be to light. Aperture, shutter speed and film speed should work in harmony to create the exposure you want for your photo. Generally speaking, you'll want a higher ISO film for night photography, as this will allow more light into your image. If you have a DSLR camera, it can be handy to bring it along on your shoot to test out the results of certain settings, and how they react to the available light. That way, you'll know what settings to use without wasting a bunch of expensive film.

I'M READY – INSPIRE ME So you've got your camera and know how to use it – you're ready to start shooting. Here's Sarah's advice: "If you're struggling to feel inspired, try and shoot at the beginning of the day when the light is more generous and creates interesting shapes, shadows and reflections. But even just going out for a walk around the neighbourhood or going to a different part of the city will work." There you have it. Now go forth and get snap happy!

HANDY RESOURCES

- Search #filmpotography on Instagram – many photographers list the camera, settings and film they used to achieve their images, so you might even learn some new techniques
- Need more inspo? Sarah's favourite film photographers include Sina Shiri, Elena Heatherwick and Katrin Koenning
- Film developing and processing services are available in most cities. A quick google should throw up places near you
- shootitwithfilm.com is brimming with helpful explainers
- More of a visual learner? Look up the beginner's series from Analogue Wonderland on YouTube
- To go deeper, check out Pushing Film and Lucy Lumen's Analog Adventures on YouTube ✿



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best dressed

we asked three rad ladies to
flip through their photo albums
and reflect on life, style and
creativity in their 20s.

AS TOLD TO EMMA DO



RITA SILVESTRI

My husband and I left Italy in 1969 and arrived in Melbourne the same year. I was 22 years old. We came here thinking we were going to stay one or two years – like a long honeymoon – and then we'd go back to Italy. But we loved it and stayed forever.

I got married in a little red miniskirt and jacket – it was the only thing I had that day, because I eloped. I didn't tell my parents that I was getting married; nobody knew. I wore the suit with a white shirt, white shoes and a bag. I told my parents I was going to a girlfriend's party and then I went out the door, off to city council to get married. And then at night I came back home, took my wedding ring off and didn't wear it until we came to Australia months later. My father would have killed me if he'd known I was getting married and coming to Australia, so everything was hush hush until we left Italy. I was a very naughty girl, but I have no regrets.

I was a hairdresser for years in Melbourne. My mum was a hairdresser back in Italy, too. So I was always into beauty, hairdressing and the fashions. Compared to the Australian people, I probably dressed a bit differently.

My auntie was a dressmaker and my mum was good at sewing, and my godmother was a professional – she used to make wedding dresses and suits and things like that. So I was spoiled growing up, because every time they had a little bit of leftover material, they'd make me a little skirt or top. When I came to Australia, I didn't have any family to do those things. And in 1969, you couldn't find much fashion here. We used to go to George's in the city, because he carried lots of imported Italian clothes. I would also sew things for myself and later on, my sister would make clothes for us and the children. In the first five years I was here, my mum would send me clothes from Italy.

The most popular hairstyle in the '70s was big and puffy – lots of teasing and hair spray. Real balloon hair. A lot of people would do the French roll at the back or have their hair really high up in a bun. We didn't use the straightener back then – the perm was very in fashion.

My favourite things from the '70s were my long skirts and the flared pants I got in Italy. I was dressed like that every day at the salon. There was a stage when everybody went hippie, and I used to wear a hair band or funny beanies. The '70s and '80s were definitely the best decades – it was very feminine. With that said, if I could have gone backwards, I'd have loved to live in the '40s when women were dressed so beautifully with corsets and tiny little waists. But you know, fashion comes and goes all the time.



Above: Rita and her husband on their wedding day



Above: Rita in front of her hair salon



Opposite page: I'm wearing socks on my arms – I don't know why! My friend made those red corduroy pants – those were my skater pants



Top left: I made these dresses out of tulle and with matching undergarments. I remember Chicks on Speed ended up buying them for a stage costume
Top right: My friend Ellen (centre) and clothes we'd bought from overseas



Above: I'm so embarrassed that I made this. At the time, I loved it so much because I'd made my own pattern, but looking back, it's like, "What is that? A polo made out of polar fleece?"



NICOLE THIBAUT

In the '90s, I was a weirdo who opened up a shop called Scrabble in Fortitude Valley, Brisbane. There were no other shops down there then – it was bleak. I started it when I was 18 with \$1,000 and stupidity, and lived out the back.

I'd always collected things and had accumulated interesting items from op shops, so I sold lots of vintage '70s clothes, jewellery, records and homewares. I also imported things from Japan and sold fanzines. It became a little hub for Brisbane people. I wouldn't call what I did a job; no one who came in really had a job. No one was ambitious. But I didn't think about things too much (I think my rent was \$30 a week) – I just dived in and lived a very active life.

My style back then was different every day; it was whatever we could afford and found in the op shop. We could find good stuff from the '50s, '60s and '70s, but if it was '80s, we wouldn't wear it. Eighties stuff was too soon! The holy grail then was to go to Toowoomba from Brisbane. There'd be warehouses full of great records and furniture – stuff that was actually from the '50s and '60s.

I moved down to Melbourne when I was around 23 or 24. My friend Ellen Turner had a shop there called Minx – we lived behind it and made our own clothes. Ellen and I loved avant-garde '60s and '70s designers. It was all a bit experimental, and we were just living in our own little bubble on Smith Street, Collingwood. We had a rehearsal space there, where bands would come to practise, and I was playing music at the time too.

I'd gone to uni back in Brisbane to study music and play the trombone, and was part of a band called Minimum Chips. We got to support a lot of amazing bands like Bikini Kill, Stereolab and Pavement when they came to Australia – we were lucky in that sense.

At that time, I hated mainstream music. There weren't any interesting crossover artists, and if something was successful, it was usually a sign it was pretty bad. We had this chip on our shoulder: you had to kind of hate yourself; you couldn't be confident. We were all just very insecure – I don't think it was good or healthy – but that's the way it was.

We had more time on our hands to dwell then, and that's when the ideas happen. We didn't have to stress about the next electricity bill because the cost of living was pretty much zero. It wasn't an ideal world – we were up against it with politics, being a woman in music was not fun, and someone once came into the shop with a machete – but we were lucky to be living in a community of weirdos where everyone knew each other.

It was a very creative, good time in my life. With music, I knew there was no money to be made or career to be had, so everything I did was for fun. I loved it so much. I hope that people can continue to just do stuff for fun and not feel like, "Is it going to get you a job?" I know everyone has to pay bills, but it was a really joyful time.

If I could bring back a trend, it would be waiting for something; not getting it straight away. Not wanting everything and thinking you can have everything. Mail order. Writing letters. Making it yourself. Seeing something on the street and thinking, "That's nice, I'll never see that again."



THEA BASILIOU

I grew up on the Sunshine Coast, but moved down to Brisbane in 1986. I was working part-time for the Commonwealth Bank at the time, trying to save money, and studying fashion at night. While trying to work out what I was going to do, I did a few road trips to Melbourne and Sydney and was so inspired by the stores that I saw. I somehow got it in my head that I was going to open a store, too – I wanted to do something accessible, but fun and make it an experience to come into.

In the early '80s, I'd discovered *Stiletto* magazine, which was Australia's answer to Andy Warhol's *Interview* magazine. *Stiletto* showcased directional Australian fashion, music and culture, including Brisbane designers going up against corporate fashion labels that dominated mainstream fashion. These designers inspired me – I wanted to be a part of the creative culture, and to be a part of the movement against the ordinary.

I was in my early 20s when I opened my store Blonde Venus in 1990. I stocked local student work and small Australian labels; people were excited and wanted to be involved. I had people coming in with things they'd made and artists wanting to know if I'd sell their hand-painted t-shirts or show their artwork. We had our first show at an artist-run space, so the art and music worlds were always a big part of it.

I also stocked my own label at the shop. For one collection, I took Greek flokati rugs – the woollen ones that are long and shaggy – and cut and dyed them and sewed them to the borders of skirts. Another collection I did was made from crochet doilies that I'd dyed and patched together with raffia. I used a lot of vintage remnants and deadstock fabrics, which is what people do now. It's funny how things come full circle.

Brisbane was so different from Sydney and Melbourne then. I remember speaking to Gary Theodore from Scanlan Theodore on the phone in the early '90s. I told him, "I've got a shop in Brisbane and want to stock your brand." And he just said to me, "Brisbane – it's another world up there, isn't it?" He was a bit snobby about it. But we had a community of people who were very interested in designer fashion, and over the years, Blonde Venus became a destination boutique.

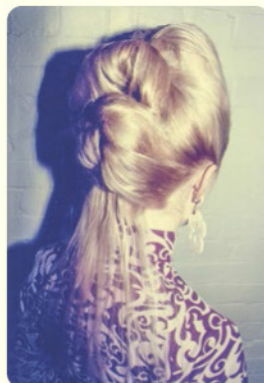
The only way I could see what was happening internationally in fashion back in the '90s was to buy these books by GAP Press that contained all the photos from the runways in Paris, London, Milan and New York. I'd order them from a bookshop and they'd come six months after the fashion show.



Left: This is in 1991. I'm modelling in a hair show for the SHOCK dance party, named after the Kylie Minogue song "Shocked". Kylie Minogue was an icon to little kids at the time who watched her on Neighbours but she was also a club-queen icon for us



Right: These were promo photos for a dance party. The raves then were big, around a thousand people. I'm wearing a vintage Bonds skivvy. A girl who came into the store had bought half the stock from a store closing down in the country, and she had these still in their plastic pockets



Above: There were a lot of '60s and '70s influences that came through the decade. We were clutching at anything that felt exciting and new – and the '60s felt new because we didn't live through it



Above: We used to choreograph all our fashion shows – it wasn't just a straight runway. Everything had to be a dance performance. Looking back, it's ridiculous, but it was a fun time

Trends happen a lot faster now, whereas back then it would take time. But trends would filter down on a major scale a year after the runways. So you'd walk into Myer and the whole floor of Miss Shop would suddenly be psychedelic, with black and white checkerboard and flower prints. It was all or nothing.

My mum definitely liked to dress up, so my interest in style probably started with her. I remember being drawn to left-of-centre bands when I was young, too – I was interested in different sounds. Hearing David Bowie as The Thin White Duke on the radio for the first time, I was like "What is that?!" Later I was drawn to the post-punk scene. I was seeing a lot of bands like The Cramps, The Go-Betweens, Sunnyboys and The Johnnys.

The music genres were very defined then, and you would specifically dress for the scene. In Brisbane, there were clubs that catered to different subcultures: there was a goth club called Morticia's that only played goth music; Lulu's only played '60s music and Flares only played '70s music. I flitted between the styles because I liked Sisters of Mercy and Siouxsie and the Banshees, but also '60s music. I experimented with all of those. I was wearing a lot of vintage first, but then I started mixing vintage with designer.

The photo of me in the blue feathers was from a party organised by a hairdresser friend. I styled the outfits with clothes from my store. It was pretty much another excuse for a rave – that's just what we did then. There was a real explosion of electronic music at that time and it was a very fun and experimental period. People really dressed up for those parties, too. It was a thing to get an outfit for every party; I think it might have been a bit competitive.

That period of my life was about creative freedom and that was very exciting. If I'd maybe gotten married and had kids, I probably would have taken a very different pathway and not been as bohemian. But I really kept pushing it. Even when I grew the store and took on more high-end brands, it was still about being experimental. When brands became too mainstream, I would just move them on. I was experimenting with my style all the way through the life of the shop, which I had for 26 years. Any genre that you can think of – I probably covered it; I went through every fashion trend. ✿

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how to go to a party by yourself

ROCKING UP TO A SHINDIG ON YOUR
LONESOME NEEDN'T BE A SCARY
THING, WRITES DEIRDRE FIDGE.

Well, well, well – if it isn't the harsh, unavoidable hand of Father Time plopping us into yet another party season. That time of year when invites flood inboxes, decorations adorn shopfronts and Mariah Carey reminds us that all she wants for Christmas is me. Or you.

You might get invited to an event where the only person you know is the host. Or maybe plus-ones aren't invited. Or maybe you just feel like meeting new people even though you hate the outside world. Before you start hyperventilating into a bag, consider my guide to attending a party solo (it's compiled by a deeply awkward person, so you know it's legit). Grab your party hat – let's do this.

THE PRE-PARTY If you have an anxious brain, it will convince you to stay home. Do your best to ignore it. Avoidance breeds avoidance – commit to attending! Hot tip: wear something you feel confident and comfortable in. Now's not the time to wear the jumpsuit with the tricky zipper that gives you a full-body wedgie.

THE ARRIVAL There are pros and cons to rocking up early or late. Arriving on time means there'll be fewer people, so more chance of being able to chat to the person you know. Late means there will be more of a crowd, but they'll be in Full Party Mode so you can make a quiet entrance without feeling like a cowboy entering a saloon who has caused the piano player to stop and the crowd to gasp and stare. Just kidding; that will never happen, unless you are in fact a cowboy with a haunted past. Key tip? Turn up when you think it will work best for you.

TIME TO MINGLE Unless you're attending a party where the theme is 'bullying' for some reason, more people than not are going to be friendly. For some people, friendly is a glassy-eyed half-smile from across the room and for others it means striding up and introducing themselves. People are inherently good. If you feel uncomfortable or anxious, here's a reminder that helps me: there is almost certainly someone else feeling exactly the same.

There are two key strategies for socialising with strangers:
1) Be yourself. Sounds obvious and annoyingly wholesome, but it's true. Do you like someone's hair? Tell them! Are you reminded

of an interesting fact when making small talk? Say it! Did someone bring their dog? Pat them! (The dog.) As long as you aren't hurting anyone's feelings, chit chat is bearable when you remember most people are just saying random thoughts that pop into their heads. 2) Be somebody else. This seems contradictory to the above point but it's not; it's about taking this opportunity of knowing *nobody* to be completely bonkers (within reason). Think about it: you may never see any of these people again! Bust out a weird joke or do an impression. John Mulaney didn't make it as a comic until he decided to wear tailored suits and speak like an old-timey entertainer, so why not treat yourself to some identity escapism? It's called the Silly Season for a reason, after all.

CUT LOOSE ON THE DANCEFLOOR No matter the age of attendees or the social circle at a party, a dancefloor will be created at some point because it is in our nature to wiggle our meat prisons around to music. Some tips: 1) Sick of talking? Head to the dancefloor! Ideally the music is so loud nobody will speak at all aside from one very determined individual who everyone is happily ignoring while they dance (avoid being this person). 2) Dance like nobody's watching. Even if people are. Who cares? If you're like me, a person whose drama teacher told them they have "bricks for feet" during school musical auditions, this is actually a gift. People dancing without caring what they look like is contagious and encourages others to join in. 3) If you're feeling brave, *start* the dancefloor. I've done this by announcing, "Did you know I can do the worm?" and slamming my body onto the floor. I cannot do the worm. (Bruising aside, I think making one person laugh slightly was worth it.) 4) If there's a lull in the playlist, put on any song of your choice, with one caveat: do not try to be cool. Put on a song that *you* want to dance to or that the host will appreciate. Ideally, something instantly recognisable, like Shania Twain's "Man! I Feel Like a Woman". Let's go girls.

THE DEPARTURE Ideally, we all thank the host and say goodbye to any new pals, basking in the glow of a successful evening. Alternatively? The old Irish goodbye. If somehow everything goes completely pear-shaped, disappear in a puff of smoke and head to bed. You did it! ✿

isabella manfredi's firsts

THE SINGER-SONGWRITER TALKS
LEAVING THE PREATURES AND DOING
THINGS HER OWN WAY.

As told to Shannon Jenkins

ON THE MOMENT THAT LED TO HER FIRST SOLO ALBUM, IZZI

I went overseas after The Preatures did a 40-date regional tour. I came back from that trip in December 2018 with what were essentially songwriting demos of potential Preatures songs. I had all these other songs on the side and thought, "I've got a record here of my own," but the guys didn't want me to release a solo album. I remember Jack Moffitt said at the time, "It's pretty selfish to want to put out a solo album. I think it'll just confuse people." I was like, "What's confusing about it?" I got so much pushback, but I did it anyway. I've loved watching other bands who've allowed their people to do their own projects. I think it's healthy: it only strengthens the work that you do as a unit, because it gives you an understanding of what you bring to the picture, where you end and where they begin.

ON THE FIRST PERSON SHE CALLED TO WORK ON IZZI When I left the band, there was a process of untangling which songs I was going to take and what was ethical. I was also stuck in contract limbo with Universal and didn't know if I was able to continue my career – in any capacity. Mushroom Music, my publishers, gave me a recording grant of \$10,000, so I decided, "Fuck it. I'm just going to start. I'm not going to sit around and wait for Universal to figure out what they're doing." I spent a lot of my 20s waiting for permission to do things. Going solo taught me that you just have to do it. So I called some friends who were in Sydney at the time – Stella Mozgawa (the drummer of Warpaint), Mikey Di Francesco (Touch Sensitive), Kirin J Callinan and the producer Chris Collins – and said, "Look, I want to do a session and track the singles off the album." We went into a studio in Sydney and finished "Jealousy", "One Hit Wonder" and "Naïve". That was huge. I sat in the driver's seat and took control, and it felt really good.



"I SPENT A LOT OF MY 20S WAITING FOR PERMISSION TO DO THINGS. GOING SOLO TAUGHT ME THAT YOU JUST HAVE TO DO IT."

ON THE FIRST TIME SHE FELT SEEN AS AN ARTIST I told some girlfriends recently that I still have moments where I feel completely illegitimate as an artist, as a musician. They laughed and told me to shut up. People tell me I come across as such a confident person, so I guess that might be surprising. But I do think it's part of the regular artist conundrum: you either feel like a complete loser, or God. The resilience to get through those periods is the crux of the craft. There were a few moments making this record where I felt seen as a songwriter. When I was working with Emma Louise, who helped write "Sleepwalking", "Seasons Change" and "Only Child", she made me feel like I wasn't just good – I was great.

ON BEING IN CONTROL OF HER SOUND FOR THE FIRST TIME

I loved being in charge of the record. It was so good to shed the fake niceties and the trying-to-please-everybody. I shed the assumption that I cared about what people thought, which I'd been carrying for a long time. I got to go deep into what was exciting to me and push the boundaries of my comfort zone. There are two rivalling artists inside me. One reaches for a pop aesthetic, which is bold, forthright and clear, and strives to push beyond the boundaries of my technical abilities. The other artist is all about passion, spirit and a punk-rock, DIY rebelliousness where, once I've done one thing, I'll reject it and want to do something completely different, just because. Those two sides battle it out most of the time.

ON BEING A FIRST-TIME MUM Motherhood is the most wondrous, all-encompassing, awe-inspiring headfuck. I've always felt really maternal, but I still had moments in those early months with my daughter, Mina, when I wondered if I'd made a terrible mistake. The realisation of "This is my life now" was hard to swallow at times.

But there's an incredible sense of fulfilment on the other side of it. To me, it's just the next stage of the human experience. A lot of people choose not to have children, and I really understand those people, particularly women artists, because it takes you away from the work. But I'm so glad I did it.

ON THE FIRST ALBUM SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH The album that is seared into my mind is *Blood on the Tracks* by Bob Dylan. When I was 13, I had my first boyfriend, and had my heart broken for the first time. Then when I was about 14 and a half, I listened to that record over and over again on the train to and from school. It had a profound effect on me – it was my first sense of having the internal world verbalised by a poet, and being seen, understood and spoken to by the conduit songwriter. It's a record that stands the test of time and I come back to it a lot.

ON HER FIRST SOLO GIG It was at Hubert in Sydney, but I was 25 weeks pregnant and the record wasn't finished, so it didn't feel like an actual show. Since the record's release in September, I played at The Royal Bondi, and that felt more like the first show back. It was great to be on stage again. I'm not gonna lie: it's a kick to the ego to go from being in a big entity that draws lots of people to having to work my way up again. There were a lot of mixed emotions: joy, excitement, nerves, adrenaline. We played some Preatures songs, and the first time the new band played "Ordinary" in the rehearsal, I burst into tears. Everyone said, "We don't have to play those songs." But I wanted to. It was just part of the process I had to go through of missing them and missing what I had, and grieving that, but also knowing that I'm moving on with my life, and I have a right to do that. ✿



writers' piece

words that need to die

four writers nominate a term
that's due for retirement.

Some words just feel gross, in the same way some fabrics make your skin crawl or when your toenail catches on the bedsheet.

By Caro Cooper

If you love to curl up with a hot *choccy* in your *jammies* after a *scrummy* dinner, chances are we're not friends. Don't get me wrong, your evening activities sound pretty solid to me, but you, as a person – you're far from it. People who abbreviate words and add an e-sounding suffix make me feel weird. It's the kind of feeling that makes me rub behind my ears while staring hard at the ground as I will it to swallow me whole.

Did you ever stay over at a friend's house when you were a little kid and the way their family did things – whether it was how they watched TV, the soap they used or what they ate for dinner – made you feel slightly homesick? It's a deeply unsettling 'no, this is wrong' feeling. That's the feeling these words give me. This is wrong. I do not like it. I want to go home.

To be clear, not all abbreviated words make me want to punch a teddy bear. I am, after all, Australian. I will raz to the servo for a pack of smokes (I actually wouldn't because I'm asthmatic, but you get the idea). I shorten

words; I make up words; I do not speak the Queen's English. None of that bothers me. You can say every second word incorrectly and I'll be fine – I understand that because I do it. It's words that are abbreviated in an affected cutesy way that trigger me. Veggie, bikkie, mummy. Swallow me, earth.

'Brekkie' kills me. It's bad when someone says it, and it's even worse when it's written on a menu. I see that on a menu and I'm out of there. I don't care if I waited 15 minutes for a table. Nothing good can come from an establishment that's talking to me like I'm an infant. Just try and serve me a veggie toastie for brekkie – I hear that roasted eggplant burns flesh like lava. Just saying.

Maybe it's not the words I hate so much as the world they represent – that saccharine girly-wirly world where women are best friends with their mothers, wear pyjama sets and don't fart in front of their partners. And why? What did those people ever do to me (apart from torment me in high school and cherish values that I believe are reason enough for humans to be wiped off the face of the Earth)? They're just trying to live their cutesy lives

and they should (I begrudgingly guess) be permitted to do so. Who am I to judge someone for wanting to drink bubbly while their hubby fires up the barbie? Maybe sneak some choccy when he's not looking. Yummy yummy in my tummy. Oh, aren't you cheeky!

I know I sound like an aggressive misanthrope, but these words do something to me. They surface an itchy rage that probably has more to do with my inability to connect with feminine women than the words themselves. Also, I grew up with a British father. We were not an affectionate family; we did not use frilly words. I once used the phrase 'tickety-boo' after reading it and my dad told me to never use it again because it made him feel weird. I get that now. Also, it is really ugly.

Some words just feel gross, in the same way some fabrics make your skin crawl or when your toenail catches on the bedsheet. There are gross things in this world and I must be brave and turn up every day, knowing that I run the risk of encountering someone who will pour their filth in my ear and my only option is to smile and take it. Scrummy!

By Tara Kenny

Once upon a time, cancelling was what you did to an unused gym membership or overzealous social plans when you were tired. You could cancel *on* a person, not cancel *them*. Today, the terms 'cancel' and 'cancelled' are thrown about in response to perceived bad behaviour with such abandon that it's difficult to remember a time when every middle-aged mum and her cavoodle were not shaking in their boots about so-called 'cancel culture'.

Back in 1981, Nile Rodgers and Chic crooned "your love is cancelled": Rodgers reportedly penned the lyric after a love interest tried to pressure a waiter into clearing a table of diners so that their party of VIPs could have the best seat in the house. It was entitled behaviour that Rodgers deemed worthy of – you guessed it – cancellation. Over the years, the use of 'cancel' as an action one takes against a wrongdoer popped up in gangster films and rap music, before becoming a mainstay on Black Twitter and eventually making its way into the popular vernacular.

To my knowledge, Nile Rodgers never put his pushy date on blast. Being cancelled today, however, implies an element of public shaming. As movements such as #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter have shown, it can be impactful and cathartic to call out powerful people and organisations on social media and in the streets, given that private, polite requests for fair treatment have been ignored throughout history. And yet, somewhere along the line we got bored of publicly piling on to politicians, titans of industry and celebrities who abuse their power, and we turned our attention to random citizens who become flash-in-the-pan social pariahs for vague and minor indiscretions. Remember "couch guy", the university student who was accused of cheating and general bad vibes

after a video where he didn't look adequately excited when his girlfriend unexpectedly turned up at his dorm room went viral? Me either! While the term cancel is often used playfully and ironically, it gets confusing when it's applied liberally to both legitimate ghouls and random TikTok youths.

As a society, we lack a widely agreed upon definition of what it means to cancel or be cancelled. Depending on the context, "cancel them!" can imply a desire to punish, lightly ridicule, deplatform, elicit an apology from, silence, fire, bankrupt, educate, bring to justice, or completely eradicate from the face of the earth. While the term is commonly associated with super-online, social-justice-warrior types, it has a punitive finality that makes the potential for redemption or forgiveness null and void. The implication that there's no coming back from being cancelled is perhaps why it strikes such fear into the hearts of many baby boomers and conservatives, who understand it as far worse a fate than whatever transgression led to said ousting in the first place. Never mind that many of the most prominently cancelled celebrities continue to enjoy unimaginable riches and the dogged adoration of their fans – looking at you, JK Rowling and Woody Allen.

All of this is to say: it's impossible to 'cancel' a person with the totality that the word suggests (at least, without going to jail or sinking your own ship in the process). And it's probably not advisable to follow the angry and aggrieved parts of yourself that might secretly wish to annihilate someone who wrongs you, starting with uttering the dreaded c-word. Instead, I say we 'divest attention', 'hold to account', 'cleanse our psyches and timelines', 'wring our hands of' and 'consciously uncouple from' toxic people and bad actors. If you disagree, just try and cancel me (I'm uncancellable).

By Serena Coady

Gelatinous. Cleat. OshKosh B'gosh. Do you feel sanitary after reading these words? Judging by the sound of you bombing into the shower, I doubt you do. But I assure you, reader, you will feel clean again! For you were not the one scratching at the keyboard, birthing these feral terms with your hands.

I believe these three words to be malignant in origin – even though they might just be Latin. I believe they hurt the ears of all. I believe these words were originally designed as curses that would incite instant insomnia, mob violence and a fortnight-long case of thrush. But as long as I don't regularly come into contact with these words, I can move on with my life. This is because I have no personal connection with what these words represent and because I think that sooner or later, the experts at *Merriam-Webster* and *Wheel of Fortune* will wake up feeling clear-minded and simply stamp them out. However, there is one word that troubles me more than the rest, because it's a word I cannot escape. That word is masturbation.

Every part of the word feels purpose-built for revulsion. By the first syllable, the word is dead in the water. 'Mas' makes me think of the mastiff, a breed of dog with round-the-clock slop chops. The word in its entirety sounds like an affliction, and a shameful one at that. To me, it's always felt like a scare-mongering term invented by a conservative authority, designed to deter people from doing the extremely fun thing it represents.

I looked into the etymology of masturbation and can't say I was far off. I also can't say I would recommend it; this research only deepened the word's rancidity. Masturbation is a compound from the Latin roots *manus*, meaning hand, and *stuprare*, meaning to defile oneself. The word is also historically linked to 'self-abuse'.

To this day, 'self-abuse' is still listed as one of the top synonyms for masturbation in the *Collins English Thesaurus*. Philosophy professor William E Phipps, wrote in the *Journal of Religion and Health*: "Social scientists who are sensitive to etymology realise that the word 'masturbation' carries too much manual association to be fully descriptive and, of more concern, has traditionally carried a negative moral judgment." So, why should we continue using a word that not only sounds like shit but is also heavily rooted in shame?

Many concepts, once considered to be cringe, have undergone recent rebrands. Take low-rise jeans. Before Missoni, Versace and Bella Hadid embraced them last season, these pelvis-centric garments were basically prohibited by law. Paleo, mullets and dad rock have also been revived (by TikTok's generous algorithm) and ushered back into the realm of palatability. I'm fairly certain none of these concepts can result in a lovely orgasm – though I am happy to be corrected – so why hasn't the word masturbation received its rebrand yet? Sure, pleasuring oneself has gained wider social acceptance in recent years, but the terminology is not bringing anything to the fight.

Masturbation might need a grassroots movement behind it. Most of the alternative terms have come from the people anyway: fap. Jerk off. Jack off. Flick the bean. Maz. Wank. Of these, 'wank' shines the brightest, probably because it has the widest comedic application. Whom among us hasn't sunk into that hard k for laughs? But in the same way masturbation doesn't need to be tied to an archaic notion of shame, it needn't be the butt of the joke, either. Masturbation is a fact-finding mission: it's the imperfect, exploratory and euphoric process of physically mapping out what makes you feel good (and at what tempo). At the end of the day (or start! Or middle! No judgment), it's a form of self-love – and this kind of magic deserves a proper name.

By Eleanor Robertson

One of the most regrettable trends in the modern habitus is that of endless self-narrativisation. Think of how the contestants describe themselves on any American reality TV show: they cannot just be living their lives – they must be overcoming adversity. Nobody describes themselves primarily in terms of their role in society or community; nobody is simply chilling. They are *triumphing over* [insert hardship real or imagined]; they are *just a kid from* [whichever state they're from], *trying to make it in the world*. They present themselves as being the hero of their own monomyth, currently slogging their way through Act 2 of 3, striving to reach the cathartic denouement when they have slain all the dragons standing between them and success.

The ever-present mark of this infuriating way of speaking is the word 'journey'. How I have come to hate this word, which is now encrusted on the discourse like pigeon shit on public furniture. My interior-decorating journey. My reactive-dog journey. My sciatica journey. My breastfeeding journey. My yoga journey. My god, my god, please, make it stop. You are not the protagonist of your own reality. Your life is not *The Lord of the Rings*; even Frodo, the most famous hero on the most perfectly crafted hero's journey of all time, had the grace to accept his role with a certain reluctant humility. Can you imagine! "Hi, I'm Frodo, I'm just a kid from the Shire on a journey to overcome the forces of evil, and I really want to win *Chopped* so I can use the money to achieve my destiny in life of throwing the one ring into the fires of Mount Doom!"

The main problem with everyone constantly nattering on about their journeys is that most people's lives, unless you know and care about them as an individual, are excruciatingly boring. Their joys

are boring; their tragedies are boring; their passions and grudges are boring. But the ubiquity of My Journey makes people think that their lives will become interesting, if only they are shoehorned into this redemptive story of adversity, resilience, hard work and eventual reward. It's just not so! I'm sorry Michelle, I would rather eat my dead cat's ashes than listen to your journey of overcoming psoriasis to achieve a master's by coursework in hair-restoration techniques.

Another problem is that, to the extent other people's lives are interesting, this one-size-fits-all way of talking about them instantly extinguishes anything you might care to hear about. It sands off all the rough edges, all the bits that don't make sense, the parts where people broke the rules or didn't get what they expected. All of this is reduced to "an obstacle on the journey", made to play a pre-defined part in the story. Maybe you changed your mind halfway through about what you wanted. Maybe you realised that the outcome you personally achieve is not actually the most important thing in the world. Maybe making your experience legible and sympathetic to an external audience is actually a pathetic activity that is only redeemed if it's done with some real artistic merit!

In the face of this adversity, and in an effort to overcome the hardships that have been visited upon me by having to listen to people talk this shite, I am embarking on a journey to ban the word 'journey'. Yes, it will be difficult. People may say, "Cultural trends can't just be halted by banning one arbitrary word," or "Why are you being such an ornery bitch about this?" or "Don't you have something better to do, like scratch your arse?" But these are just obstacles on my journey, and I will triumph over them in order to achieve my destiny: living in a world where the word 'journey' is banned. ✱

stuff

gone swimming

swish towels for summertime dips.

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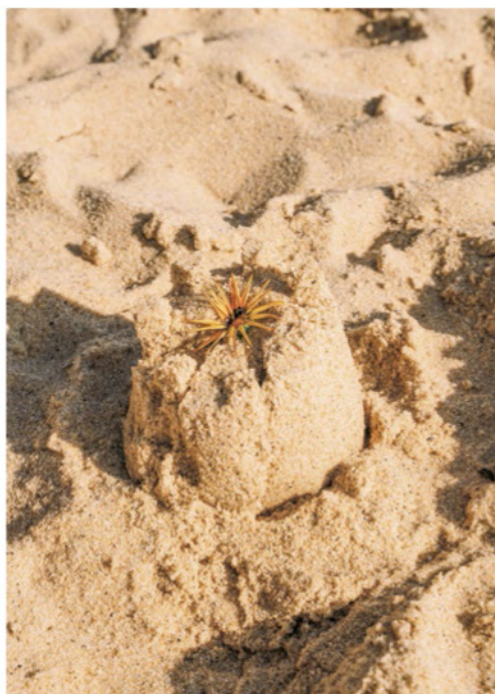
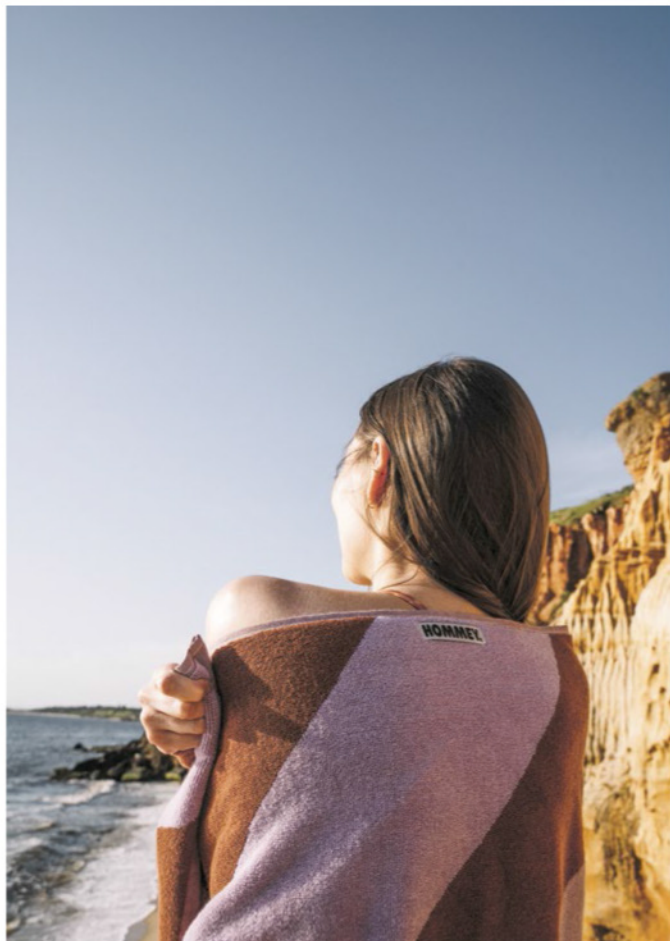
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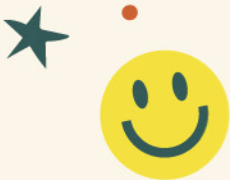


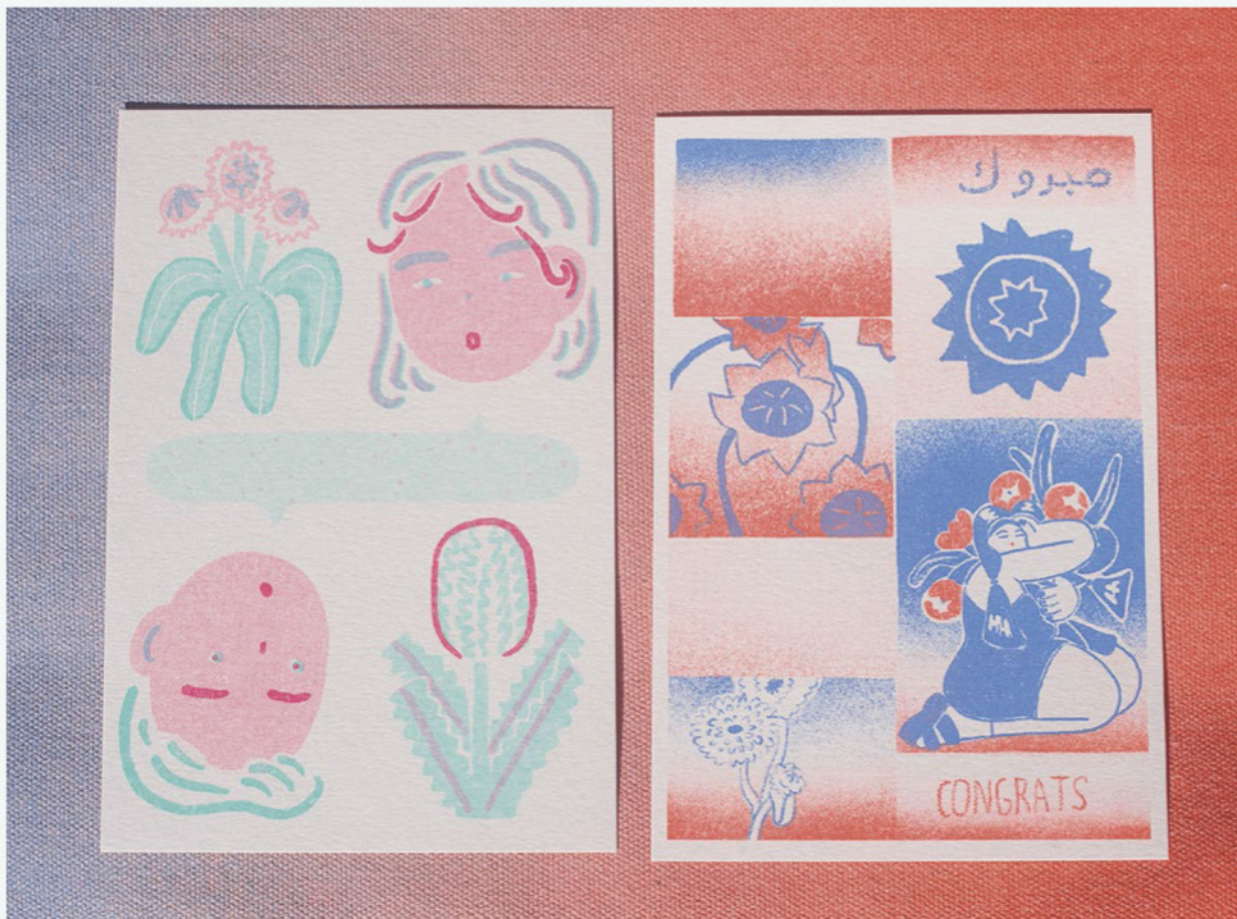




meet your 2022 good stuff winners

we run our annual awards program, good stuff,
to unearth exciting creative talent across
australia and new zealand. we were mightily
impressed by all your entries this time round,
but in the end, there could only be six winners.
turn the page to meet your 2022 champs
– and prepare to be dazzled.





yasuko's australian native postcard set

yasuko toda



“I loved the story behind Yasuko’s work, and how she used lockdown to connect with not only her immediate environment, but also Australia’s unique landscape of Indigenous flora. As a fellow immigrant, I have been educating myself on the incredibly rich history of Australia’s First Peoples and their caretaking of this land – I commend Yasuko for bringing it into her work in her own way.”

Jeremy Wortsman, founder and director of The Jacky Winter Group,
Good Stuff art + illustration judge



Tell us a bit about yourself. I'm an illustrator and artist from Tokyo. I also do animation, zines, manga and conceptual art.

What did you want to be when you were a kid?

My dream was always to become an artist; I was obsessed with drawing ever since I was little. When I was younger, I really admired the French painter Marie Laurencin.

Tell us about your winning entry. Australia is best known in Japan for its post-invasion colonial culture. Lockdowns brought my attention to my local environment and I realised that a rich ecology of native plants existed aeons before white settlement. I wanted to celebrate this unique and interesting flora with a postcard set.

How do you stay inspired? My inspiration is drawn from everything I see in my daily life. I really appreciate the product, graphic and interior design I see in Sydney – it's happier and more colourful than what I'm used to in Tokyo.

What's one thing we should know about you?

I have a passion for Arabic culture and language – I have been studying Arabic for a number of years. When I came to Australia for the first time, I was more interested in the Australian Arabic-speaking community than the English-speaking ones, to the point where I worked in a Western-Sydney Lebanese restaurant during Ramadan. It left an impression and I'm writing a manga about my experience.

Who do you look up to? I really respect my late, great-aunt. To me, she was kind of a proto-feminist who, despite growing up in what would have been a very patriarchal period in post-war Japan, resisted the idea that she had to settle down and marry.

What's your next project? A few things I can't talk about yet, but I'm currently selling a collection of climate-action shirts with the label High Tees. The concept is 'protest ready-to-wear' – every day can be a demonstration.

Where can we see more? Online at yasuko.garden and on Instagram at [@anaismiysk](https://www.instagram.com/anaismiysk).





ellie's fashion label, squint

ellie vallely



“We fell in love with Ellie’s designs. Her pieces evoke a real sense of joy and happiness at a time we need it most! We loved the brand’s use of colour, the vintage touches that shine through and Ellie’s sustainable practices. It was also great to see the pieces showcased on different body types.”

Fatuma and Laurinda Ndenzako, designers and founders of Collective Closets,
Good Stuff fashion judges



Hello, what do you do? I am the designer and maker behind SQUINT. I spend my days creating beautiful clothing for folks all over the world. I design, pattern cut, source, sew and market everything.

How did you get into fashion? Sewing and small business is in my blood. My nanna was a talented sewer and knitter who worked at my great-auntie's bridal shop in Dublin. When she had a family, she made absolutely everything, including an infamous knitted bikini for my mum. When I got into music in my early teens, I made clothes so I could emulate my favourite musicians – I would stay up all night making an outfit for the next day.

What's the goal at SQUINT? To create clothing that makes people feel authentically themselves.

Tell us about your winning collection. It celebrates your everyday wins and dressing for joy. I pulled references from childhood celebrations and nostalgic sporting events. I also focused on natural fibres, lower-impact fabrics such as Tencel, as well as vintage fabric from op shops.

What's been your biggest challenge? I recently lost my mum unexpectedly. A loss like that shakes you in ways you could have never imagined and I'm learning how to be in this world without her. By treating myself with kindness and grace, I've been able to find solace in my work as a form of connection to her.

What's your advice for others in fashion? Spend time finding your unique voice. Try not to get swept up by trends. I felt as though I had been sprinting ever since I left university, rushing to release collections before someone else released something similar. I closed my business for over six months to be with and care for my mum. Returning has given me perspective on how I was running myself dry before. Taking things more slowly produces better work and is healthier for you in the long run.

Where can we see more? At squintclothing.com and on Instagram and TikTok at [@squintclothing](https://www.instagram.com/squintclothing).





liz's design, enveloping



liz christiansen



“Liz’s design is so inventive and playful. I love the way the graphic leaves shift the design from abstract to illustrative and how they create an intriguing texture. There’s a lovely layer of personal narrative, and on a functional level, the design is an awesome print that will bring a pop of fun wherever it lands.”

Narelle Brewer, graphic designer and design director at Studio Round,
Good Stuff design judge

Tell us about yourself. I'm a multidisciplinary designer and artist focused on creating vibrant and bold graphics. I have been a graphic designer for over 20 years and am currently moving towards surface pattern design, mixed media, collage and art licensing.

How did you end up on this path? I wasn't aware that a career in surface-pattern design was available, so I landed in graphic design and typography, which I loved. For years I filled my creative urges outside of graphic design with vintage dress shopping and poring over home-interior magazines – coveting the colours, patterns and artwork that adorned the walls and fabrics. It's only upon looking back that I can see the signs. Now I'm on a new journey of surface-pattern design, rediscovering my own creative style after years of focusing on client work and following briefs.

Tell us about your winning design. *Enveloping* is an analog collage created using patterns from the inside of vintage paper envelopes. The original collage was digitally edited to make a repeating pattern with a layered garden pattern over the top. My father was an avid stamp collector, so our house growing up was filled with stamps cut from envelopes. Many of my collage pieces are created from his collection.

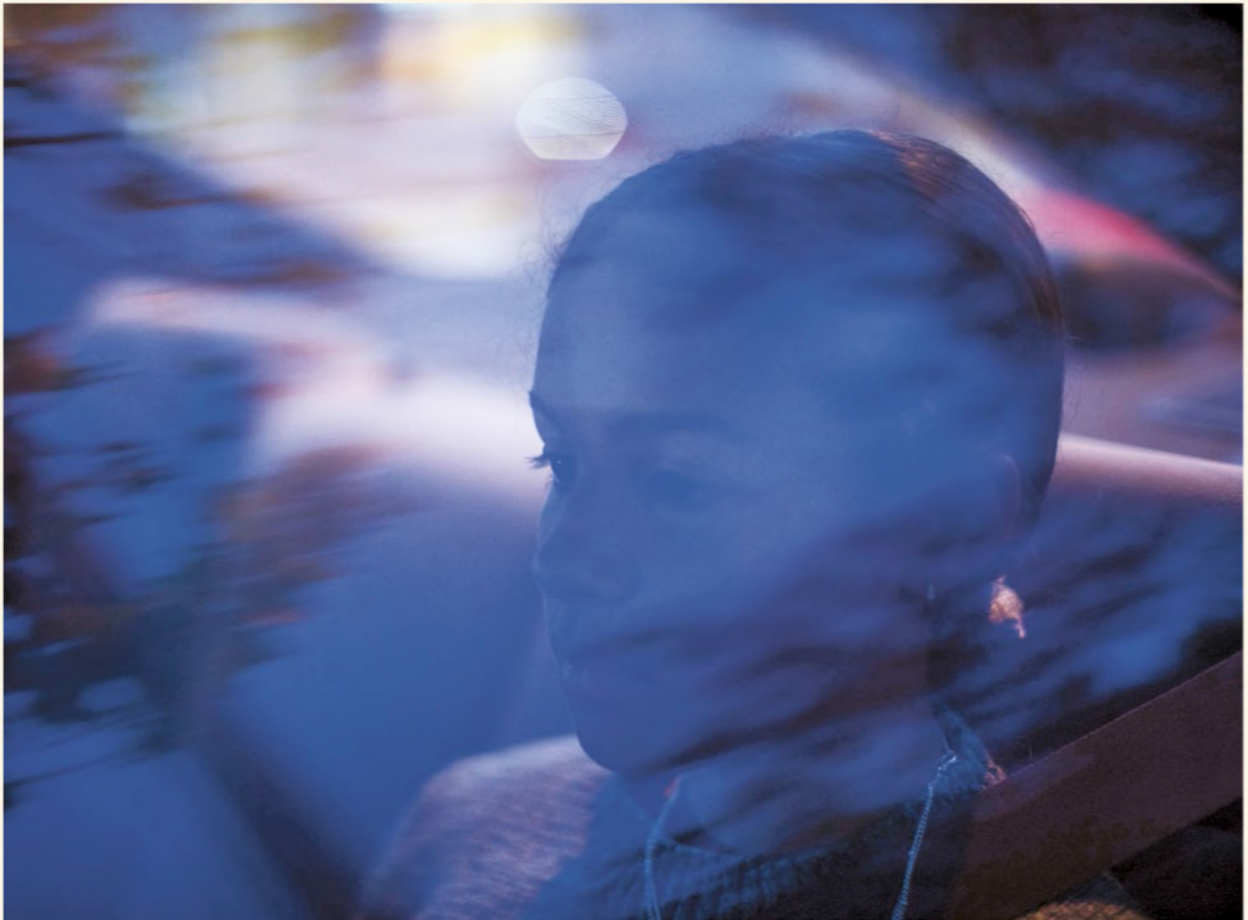
What's the best piece of advice you've received? Don't be afraid to open a new door, step through it and bring all your experiences with you to create new ones. Be confident in yourself and embrace your weirdness.

Who do you look up to? Creatives who have crossed the worlds of art and design and who are commercially successful – like Ken Done and Lisa Congdon.

What's next for you? Developing a larger portfolio for licensing and collaborating with brands across fashion, homewares and stationery. I'll be launching an online art-print store featuring mixed media and collage artwork soon.

Where can we see more? Online at lizc.com.au and on Instagram at [@lizc.studio](https://www.instagram.com/lizc.studio).





georgia's photo, sister

georgia
brogan



"I chose this work because it moved something within me. It is very clear to me that there is more going on in this picture than meets the eye. I love Georgia's artistry, how she plays with shadow and the tones of the image that complement the scene."

Isabella Moore, photojournalist, Good Stuff photography judge



Tell us about yourself. Hello! I am a freelance photographer, occasional YouTuber and a full-time film student and cat lover.

What makes you passionate about photography?

I've never really sat down and considered this, because I feel like when you're passionate about something, you don't feel the need to understand why that's the case - it's just this way of being. But, to try and answer, I'd say I love the ability to depict the world through my eyes.

Tell us about this image. I snapped this picture of my younger sister last year. She is in her early teens and very much inhabits her own internal world. I used the dusk reflections on the glass to emphasise her beauty, and adolescence in general.

What's your dream photo project? It would involve both travel and collaboration with others. An ongoing project of mine involves me interviewing people in their late teens and 20s about the experience of youth, and photographing them in spaces they hold dear. I would love to meet a larger range of participants and include their stories and experiences. frankie readers around Australia - please reach out if you want to participate!

What do you do when you're feeling low on creativity? I recharge by stepping away from technology. I find it useful to go for a walk or to sit in a quiet place alone. When my mind has nothing to chew on or distract it, it generally blurts out something interesting. I also journal most days. Unexpected ideas often pop out when I get into the writing flow.

What's your next goal? I'm really just starting out in my career, so my next goal is to start a photography business. I love creative photography, but am also highly interested in photojournalism and would love to work on projects that concern social-justice issues as well.

Where can we see more of your work? Online at georgiabrogan.com and on Instagram at [@georgia.brogan](https://www.instagram.com/georgia.brogan).





shani's creation, future heirlooms

shani nottingham



“I had to do a double take when I saw these. At first I thought they were dainty vintage ceramics, but nope – they’re clever assemblage plates made from recycled bread tags! I love how Shani truly turned trash into adorable treasures. I also love the community aspect of this work, and how people from all over the world sent Shani their bread tags so she could create these. I shan’t ever throw a bread tag away again!”

Rachel Burke, artist and designer, Good Stuff craft judge

Hello, what do you do? A lot of dreaming. In my adult life, I teach at a small country school two days a week, and the rest of the time I spend on my creative practice, on my little art business 'rare pear studio' or The Breadtag Project.

What kind of media do you enjoy working with?

I was diagnosed with adult ADHD a few years ago, and my artistic practice is probably a reflection of that. I do many things: I majored in photography a zillion years ago, but I am also an illustrator and do lino printing, video and collage.

How did you become obsessed with bread tags?

It began when my teenage son hoovered up large amounts of bread, and as teenagers do, left the tags on the bench top. When I cleaned up after him, I thought the colours looked cool so I popped them into a bowl and made a simple picture to put up on Insta. I began researching what other colours of tags were available, planning more pictures. That's when I discovered what nasty little bits of plastic they are. Although I hate what they actually are, I am totally fascinated by the shapes, colours, designs and their evolution. I get really excited when I find a 'specimen' I have not seen before.

What's the best piece of advice you've gotten?

You just have to START. That was a biggie. A quote I always reflect on by Anaïs Nin: "And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

What's your next goal? I am writing a book about bread tags – seeing that published is my next big ambition. I'd also love to do artist residencies in other parts of Australia and the world.

Where can we see more of your work? Online at shani-nottingham.com and on Instagram at [@the_breadtag_project_](https://www.instagram.com/the_breadtag_project_).





designs by Nagula Jarndu

nagula jarndu



“Nagula Jarndu is an Aboriginal social enterprise created for Indigenous women, and most importantly, led by Indigenous women. It has a focused and strategic self-sustaining business model, and its retail outlet on Yawuru country in Broome has stood the test of time. But Nagula Jarndu is not only a store: it’s also a meeting place for Indigenous women, and a training ground. Nagula Jarndu’s clothing and homewares tell a story, helping to preserve Indigenous cultural knowledge.”



Laura Thompson, CEO and co-founder, Clothing The Gaps,
Good Stuff small business + community judge

What's a typical day at Nagula Jarndu like? Eunice Yu:

A typical day at Nagula Jarndu (Saltwater Woman in the local Yawuru language) involves artists creating in the studio. This could be working on new designs, mixing colours, printing on fabrics, working on commissions or designing for new product ranges such as clothing or jewellery.

What do you create? Our artists predominantly work with printed textiles. The technique in house is hand-block prints using linocut or Styrofoam.

How did Nagula Jarndu begin? Nagula Jarndu began over 30 years ago as a place for Yawuru women to come together to share and preserve culture and language. This was an era when our mothers' generation set about on their journey of self-determination and autonomy. Over time, Nagula Jarndu has evolved into a textiles-based art centre that continues to share and preserve culture through art.

What role does the centre play in the local community?

We provide a culturally safe space for all First Nations women to come together and create art or have a cuppa and a yarn. The centre promotes artists' work and provides income through commission. We facilitate external art workshops for the women and provide pathways to participate in exhibitions and markets. We also advocate for the women and assist them with matters such as will-writing, banking, Centrelink issues etc.

Where do the artists find inspiration? From their culture, their Country and the stories that have been passed down to them from the old people.

What's one business lesson you'd like to pass on?

Listen to your liyan (spirit/heart feeling) to guide you in what feels good for yourself and your circle of family, friends, colleagues, visitors and community. Everyone else's way of doing business might not be the right fit for you.

Where can we see more? Online at nagulajarndu.com.au or on Instagram at @nagulajarndu.



And a round of applause for...

your finalists



DANNI DUANE DOPAMINE DRESSES



SAMANTHA CURCIO HELLO EVERY BODY!



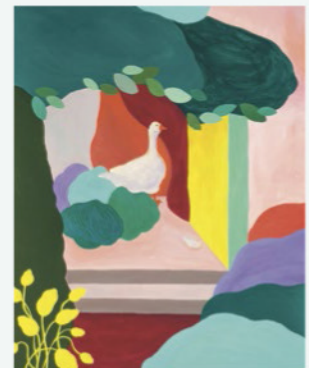
FINN O'SULLIVAN LAWN BOWLS



KATIE ZHOU ONCE UPON A TIME



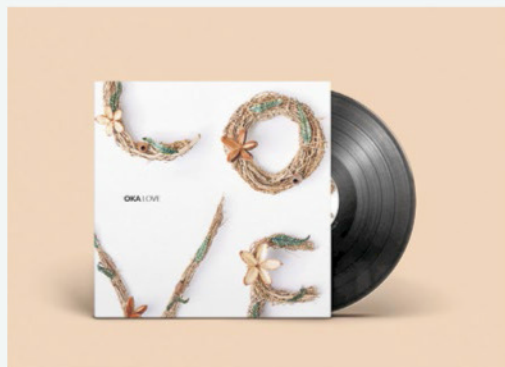
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ELAINE LI A LOOSE GOOSE



ZOE VAN DINTER TANNIN HERO DESIGN



SABINA CUBEDDU OKA LOVE VINYL COVER



RACHEL O'BRIEN YOU WON'T REMEMBER THIS



TARA JEISMAN SEA GALS



SALLY PISKURIC UP TO US



CHILU KRILE STAY AFLOAT



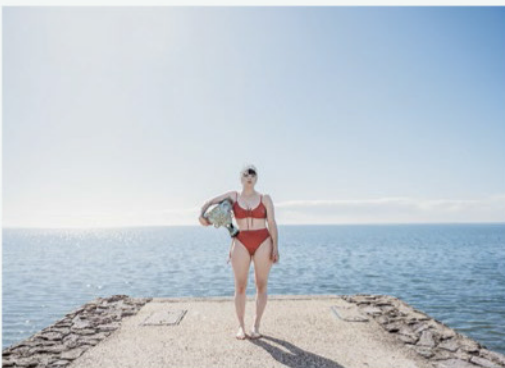
JUS GUDI SUNKING



SASHA AND KAORI FINLAY THE ORI PROJECT PACKAGING



EM JENSEN WHAT A DRAG IT IS TO SEE YOU



MELANIE HINDS FUN AND GAMES



SHUARI NAIDOO MORAKA MENSTRUAL CUPS



HAMISH BASSETT TINY POTS



VIKTORIA KARAMAN TREE LAMPS



LUCY GROVE-JONES NOT ENOUGH HOUSEPLANTS



SARAH WILLMOTT JOODE SOCKS



EMMA BEESLEY FLORAL MIRROR



ANNABELLE RADFORD CLEO & CANARY



EILISH GILLIGAN STAR-CROSSED PR



GUY DEMPSTER AND OTIS NG DEMPSTAH



ALANA DIMOU THE SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW



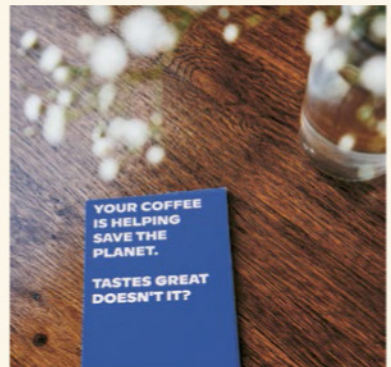
KATE DOHERTY THE OLIVE HAT



SARAH HOOD AMONGST THE LILY PADS



LEAH HOLSCHER HOME



ELIZA WHITBURN-WEBER GROUNDUP COFFEE RECYCLERS

each category winner goes home with \$1000 prize money and tailored mentorship sessions via creative plus business's grow program. a big thank you to everyone who entered this year – we tip our hats to you. to learn more about good stuff, head to frankie.com.au/goodstuff or scan the qr code. *



more to
see here





love, sex & disability

why are pleasure and intimacy shrouded in secrecy when we talk about chronic illness and disability? four lovely humans break the taboo by sharing their stories.

INTERVIEWS BRIDGET MCARTHUR

fi macrae

It was the classic endo story, really. The pain started out mild when I was 23, but soon intensified to the point where I was collapsing on the floor or in the shower. My doctor said it was just period pain, and I was like, "OK, cool." It was my partner at the time who eventually said I should get a second opinion.

It was a slog, but one mass the size of a tennis ball on my left ovary and several surgeries later, I got my diagnosis. I've been in and out of hospital for the past five years. That's probably been the biggest impact on my sex life: the medical trauma. I wish I'd known going into diagnosis how invasive that process is, particularly as a young person with less of an intimate knowledge of my body and sense of pleasure. You can wake up from surgery feeling pretty violated – you don't really know what has happened in your body. It can be hard to then transition from that to the bedroom. I thought, "How am I expected to find pleasure and intimacy in a space that's become so painful and clinical?"

Initially I just wanted to separate my disability from sex and pleasure completely. But then I started to develop rituals to redirect my associations with medical appointments and my disability away from pain and towards pleasure. If I know I have an appointment that's going to be invasive, I'll plan something for after that will

bring me pleasure. It doesn't have to be sexual – it might be eating something I love, or lying in the sun. I've also more recently been learning about using orgasm as a tool to calm your body and combat pain – something no doctor ever brought up with me.

Sex tends to be viewed by doctors as either irrelevant or too awkward to bring up. A doctor once put me on a medication to suppress my nerves and inhibit pain, but obviously it also suppressed clitoral stimulation. That should have been raised with me. It should have been my choice.

I created the Private Parts community (@privatepartscommunity) on Instagram to break some of the taboos and open up discussion surrounding disability, particularly in relation to intimacy and pleasure. A lot of disabled people I speak to agree that it feels like the choice is between either not having sex at all – because it's too complicated to explain or there's shame – or becoming a pro at communicating, knowing your body and finding sexual partners who are willing to learn and grow with you. I want to help people move towards making the latter choice, if they have that desire, because I think sex and pleasure are so important. And because there's such a huge lack of sex education in schools for disabled people, who have typically been viewed as asexual. That needs to change.



jamila main

I was in my final years of acting school when my health took a drastic nosedive. I was diagnosed with endometriosis three days after graduating, and subsequently osteoarthritis and ulcerative colitis.

Of course, it changed my life – particularly how people saw me, and how I saw myself. But at the same time, it was a relief to not have to keep searching and fighting, begging doctors to listen. It also opened me up to the local disability community – a hugely empowering, supportive group of people.

That's how I met Nory. Introduced by a mutual friend (artist Ruby Allegra), we had our first proper meeting in May at my show *Benched*, which explores athleticism and disability on stage. Nory was one of the artists presenting work in the theatre foyer. We had a magical first kiss beneath Nory's artwork, "the Future is Disabled". I remember thinking at the time, "This is so much better than fireworks."

Nory is the first disabled person I've been in a long-term relationship with. In the past, with a lot of the sex I was having, I wasn't listening to my body, or what it needed in terms of pain relief. I'd never been taught to prioritise myself. I had a brief crack at the dating-app thing but was stressed about when to reveal my disability. The impulse to hide was very exhausting.

With Nory, I feel very comfortable voicing my needs – whether that's in bed, on a date or otherwise. We share some similar

diagnoses and have used some of the same mobility aids, so we have a really intimate knowledge of each other's bodies and experiences. Also, as two queer people, we're used to having sex in 'unconventional' ways, using creativity and problem-solving.

Still, every day I face people who don't think I am or should be a sexual being, simply because I'm in a wheelchair, or using a cane. That was quite a shock the first few times. I was surprised at how much a simple metal frame that I sit in to take me around could repulse or terrify people. But the minute you're standing, you know they'd probably be checking you out. Even doctors are often surprised that I'm queer and have a girlfriend. They either presume I'm having heteronormative sex or am not sexually active at all.

A big contributing factor is the lack of representation in the media; ignorance is a breeding ground for taboo. Fortunately, I feel like that's beginning to change. As an actor and a writer, I hope I can help create more depictions of disabled people being sexy or romantic; having good sex, bad sex, awkward, funny, beautiful, risqué sex; loving and being loved.

I recently debuted a show called *Pillow Talk* which aims to do exactly that. The piece features sapphic pain poems that I wrote for Nory. I've never loved anyone enough to write love poems. We've been together barely five months but from the start there has been an immense sense of trust and safety, and a big part of that is from us both embracing our own and each other's disabilities and access needs.



nory gretz

The day after I turned 15, I was in a big car accident with my whole family. My dad was killed instantly. I was left with a broken spine, dislocated left knee and ankle, and a broken right leg.

As I went through the process of relearning to walk, no one broached the topic of how disability might affect my sex life – unless you count my friends at the time, who looked up sex positions for people in wheelchairs as a joke.

It wasn't until very recently that I've started seeing resources on the internet on safe, pleasurable sex for disabled people, or sex toys made for us. Before that, I had a lot of sex where I was pushing my own boundaries, trying to work within the able framework.

I also recently got diagnosed with ADHD and autism, which I think I completely missed when I was younger because I had such hectic childhood trauma. That revelation has helped me understand myself and my relationships.

I still struggle with internalised ableism. I've got a lot to learn from Jamila in that regard. I'm supposed to be wearing a knee brace most days because it's difficult for me to walk long distances, but I don't because they're ugly. I've got an ankle brace, but it can be hidden with my boots, meaning I'm able to pass as able. Similarly, I ride around on an e-bike because I'd rather do that than use something that is clearly a mobility aid. And it's weird, because I think Jamila is so hot when she's in

her wheelchair or using her cane, but in my head, I won't be hot if I do it. I guess you're always your own exception in that way.

Before dating Jamila, on the apps, it was pretty impossible to know if someone you were going to be meeting up with was ableist or not. During COVID-19, there was that little vaccinated sticker you could put on your profile, which was cool because I was on immunosuppressants at the time. It went some way to identifying people who aren't blatantly ableist, or at least engaging in eugenics. Like, you might be ableist, but at least you're not trying to kill me.

Even those who were actively trying not to be ableist struggle to understand. One white person I was sleeping with started sleeping with a pillow between their knees "in solidarity", like I do for my spinal injury and osteoarthritis, which wasn't necessary. It can also be really hard to participate in the queer community. Most queer events aren't accessible for lots of disabled people, despite there being so many of us.

I'd never dated a disabled person before Jamila, or someone who understands when I'm communicating my access needs and doesn't even blink. There's no sense of feeling guilty asking for help. And the sex is hot. Even our first kiss – as I tell everyone, it's really corny – it was electromagnetic; like when you start kissing someone and you can't stop. Jamila asked me to be their girlfriend a month later. Spoiler alert: I said yes.





akii ngo

My journey of chronic illness and disabling pain started from a very young age. I was born with necrotising enterocolitis (NEC) – a life-threatening bowel condition. I was airlifted from rural Western Australia within hours of birth for extensive surgery – the first of many.

My parents are war-torn refugees who barely survived fleeing and living in camps for many years, so their education level wasn't very high, let alone their awareness and understanding of the complex world of disabilities or how my conditions might affect sex, joy and pleasure for me.

With a childhood full of intergenerational trauma and just trying to survive, 'the birds and the bees' wasn't exactly a priority, and because I skipped a few grades due to extreme academic expectations, I didn't receive any formal sex ed. "Don't get pregnant" was the main takeaway. Plus, coming from a strict Asian household, such topics are very taboo. When I was pressured into having sex for the first time at 13, with someone four years my senior, I still remember going home and scrubbing myself for hours, crying and feeling disgusted. I wasn't entirely sure what had happened to me.

I moved out of home at 15, as soon as I could. A lot of that had to do with family violence, which of course impacted my relationships and self-love. I essentially 'accepted the love that I thought I deserved', and what was modelled to me as a child. I was harmed physically, emotionally and/or sexually in almost every relationship I had. The spinal injury that now permanently affects every part of my life is the direct result of intimate partner violence.

I also had poor body image which I am still unlearning to this day. Like many Asian households, my family had typical Eurocentric Western beauty standards. Around age 13, my mother attempted to force double-eyelid surgery on me. Thankfully, my father aborted the torture as I was crying, kicking and screaming, but I still have the surgical and emotional scars.

From the moment I was born, I was told regularly that no one would ever love me – that my body was flawed and I would never be enough. The medicalisation of my body also reinforced that

something will always be 'wrong' with me. So when it came to 'love' and relationships, I thought I had to be grateful for whatever I was offered.

A lot of that changed when I started dating my current partner, almost 11 years ago. I'd just gotten out of a pretty intense, abusive relationship. I wasn't ready to trust or be with anyone. We actually started off just texting for a while, so when we finally met, they already knew my whole back-story. We were really comfortable together right away. There were no strings and no expectations. I was about to move to Japan, and we agreed that if we were meant to be, things would work out. I guess we were meant to be.

We've since been through so much together: trauma, pain, life-or-death situations, but also joy, success and incredible adventures. My pain and health have continued to worsen over the last few years, including various challenges to feelings of pleasure. Sex and intimacy have become increasingly difficult. But it's something we navigate together, and my partner has never once made me feel there are expectations. Intimacy isn't just dependent on sex, but on security, connection and mutual understanding. With my partner, I can be 100-per-cent, unapologetically myself. And that is the best feeling.

Despite my joy and my decade-long love story, I am regularly informed by society that I should be 'grateful' my partner is with me – that they're a 'hero' for 'dealing' with me. This mindset is as insulting as it is dangerous. It reinforces that you should accept whatever 'love' or affection is on offer – including when it's abusive.

It's this sort of systemic and insidious ableism and discrimination that motivates my work as an educator, model, actor, survivor-advocate and disability activist. As someone who is disabled, neurodivergent, chronically ill, trans non-binary and a person of colour from a refugee background, I have unique perspectives and will continue to fight for opportunities to break preconceived notions about multiple marginalised and disadvantaged communities. ✿



object appreciation

JORDAN BOLTON BRINGS FILM
BACKGROUNDS TO THE FORE.

Who are you and what do you do? I am an artist in Manchester, UK, making posters and comics. My average day is getting up and writing ideas in the morning, then reading for a couple of hours, then drawing for the rest of the day.

Can you sum up your artistic style in a sentence? Focusing on the background details.

How did you get to making these film posters? I started off making posters for music and poetry nights in Manchester, but I lacked technical or digital skills. At the same time, I had just gotten an iPhone and started taking photographs, so I decided to set up the poster info physically and then take a photo, which would become the poster. When I became interested in making film posters, I tried to think of an idea where I could use photography – that led to my *Objects* series in 2016. The project ended in 2021 when comics became my main project.

What's involved in making the posters? I pick movies with exciting colour palettes and set design, which is why I've done so many Wes Anderson posters. I watch the film multiple times in slow motion and screenshot any object I see. I decide on the 70 or so objects that best represent the themes and colour palette of the film, then I either make the objects from clay, buy new objects or repurpose objects I've made before. They're usually all made in life-size.

Have you had any failed experiments? There are a lot of films I watch and make screenshots of, then decide not to do because they don't feel interesting enough. But once I've started creating the objects, I've never gone back.

It's a rainy day and you're stuck inside. Which movie do you reach for? I love the first 30 minutes of *Notting Hill*. Once it gets into the plot, I'm not as interested, but the first part perfectly represents this idealised '90s version of London that I grew up thinking of.

How did your cassette series begin? I liked the look of stacked cassette tapes – how equal they are and the blocks of colour with type on them. It seemed obvious to try doing them as films since I was already making film posters.

Are you much of a collector? Strangely enough, I don't really collect anything; I have so many boxes filled with objects from past posters that I guess those are my collections.

What do you love most about doing poster and book design? It allows me to analyse and dissect films in a way I wouldn't be able to by watching them. It's wonderful to make art out of that, like taking one thing you are passionate about and turning it into something else you are passionate about.

What are you working on next? I'm working on a series of short comics called *Scenes From Imagined Films*, which you can follow at @jordanboltondesign on Instagram. Making the objects in my film posters has allowed me to learn about filmmaking, which has transformed into me making comics instead of posters. ✿



Gettle
Volume
on Shrub



BEAN SECURITY



FOOTED



SALE



RANGE
HATS
40% OFF



say a little prayer

TARA KENNY HAS MADE PEACE WITH
THE BUDDHA INSIDE HER HEAD.

I grew up attending a Tibetan Buddhist temple in Melbourne's southeast, where devotees of the head monk would defend his long and droning sermons by framing them as an intentional test of his followers' patience (an incredibly genius marketing tactic). As a tween, I would pass these multi-hour-long sessions by covertly reading *Sweet Valley High* books. While those around me were trying to grasp the Buddha's 'Four Noble Truths', I was wondering if hunky Todd Wilkins was going to end up with book-smart Elizabeth (good twin) or feisty Jessica (evil twin).

In between weekly visits to the temple, each day my mum and stepdad sat diligently in the lotus position on floor cushions and prayed to a makeshift at-home shrine complete with Green Tara Buddha figurines, tea lights, water bowls and ample incense. When friends came over, I would usher them away from this weird and wonderful sanctuary and dismiss their curious questions. It was even harder to explain why our family opted to fashion a DIY catch-and-release mouse trap to fight a home rodent infestation, or the purpose of a puja ceremony where we released fish from a pet store into a public lake (I hope they made it, but fear the worst).

While my mum grew up in a Theravada Buddhist household in Sri Lanka, it was unexpectedly my Italian-Australian stepdad who nurtured her interest in Mahayana Buddhism. After being raised Catholic, he discovered Buddhism back in the footloose and fancy-free '70s on an emergency trip to India and Nepal to save a friend who had "gone crazy", aka discovered Eastern spirituality. Over the years, Mum's devotion surpassed his, as she increasingly structured her life around intensive silent retreats and spent more and more time with fellow seekers. It was still a shock when in my early 20s she announced that she was becoming a Buddhist nun, and even more of a surprise when she actually followed through.

Feeling confused and resentful, I renounced religion: I was to have nothing to do with the strange forces that had transpired to replace the mother I knew and loved with 'Tenzin Lekdron', the new name assigned to her by the Dalai Lama.

After many years and heartfelt mother-daughter conversations over cups of tea, I'm now at peace with Mum's decision to go all in on a life of faith, service and reflection. I initially assumed becoming a Buddhist nun meant giving up on life and whiling away your days alone in a cave in the mountains. To the contrary, Mum now splits her time between Sri Lanka and Australia: studying and teaching Buddhism, supporting a young women's shelter, performing grandma duties for my niece and swapping robes for civilian clothing to get cheeky lattes with me when I'm in town. In short, she's not a regular nun, but a cool nun!

However, I can't help but laugh when Westerners insist that Buddhism is not "really a religion" and doesn't sow discord or encourage blind worship on par with Christianity and other faiths. Get back to me once you've read up on Buddhist nationalism in Sri Lanka or Myanmar, seen someone bow down and literally kiss a monk's feet, or heard the goss that goes down among a pack of Buddhist nuns. Believe me, it's not as chill as Thich Nhat Hanh or the Dalai Lama would have you believe!

As I mellow in my old age – yes, I'm a geriatric millennial – and have a crack at finding meaning and purpose in life, I often surprise myself by returning to the central tenets of Buddhism. Lofty ideas such as reincarnation and the acceptance that life inevitably involves suffering help me with everything from finding motivation to play with my cat – I might come back as a feline in the next life – to channelling serene patience with doggedly atheist friends who dismiss religion as the "opiate of the masses".

Sometimes, I think about going to a Tibetan Buddhist temple and actually listening to the monk's teachings, but so far, I've opted to cobble together my own version of religious-adjacent devotion with breathwork circles, astrology meetups and Zoom mindfulness meditations. At night, instead of counting sheep, I inadvertently find myself reciting the Buddhist mantra "om tare tuttare ture soha" in my head. I'm not sure if I believe that chanting alone can liberate me and all beings from true suffering, fear and disease, but I am humbled to join all those before me who've given it a red-hot go. ❀



"IT WAS A SHOCK WHEN MUM
ANNOUNCED SHE WAS BECOMING
A BUDDHIST NUN, AND EVEN
MORE OF A SURPRISE WHEN SHE
ACTUALLY FOLLOWED THROUGH."





future fashions

STEP INTO DESIGNER CELINE KWAN'S LIVING-ROOM UTOPIA.

Tell us about how this collection began for you. Throughout the pandemic, we found ourselves stuck in our living rooms and reminiscing about the small details of normal life that we used to take for granted. For AW22, I wanted to create a living-room utopia: a celebration of the beauty and joy that can be discovered in our immediate surroundings at home.

What were some of your inspirations? Famous product designs and designers of the 1960s and '70s; the work of Joe Colombo (he was so ahead of his time. His 'Smoke' glass would be quite scandalous by today's standards), Verner Panton and Eero Saarinen in particular, since they did not sacrifice function for aesthetic value. I have carried this principle into my designs by creating garments that look beautiful while being worn and can also be admired after they are taken off. Garments that dramatically transform, inflate and change shape create a sense of drama; they challenge clothing norms and allow me to capture the beautiful shapes of furniture that I admire so much.

In terms of research, I focused on '70s futurism and the 'space race' style. Films such as Woody Allen's *Sleeper* and Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* provided rich aesthetic inspiration and depict a future where cutting-edge materials of the '70s, such as thermoplastics and PVC, are used in abundance.

Tell us about how you made these looks. One of the techniques I used was 3D printing (you can see it on the floral embellishments, earrings and fabric – they are all 3D printed). I focus on using modern materials and experimental production to develop advanced textiles that are beautiful, ethical and sustainable. 3D printing is less wasteful and lower cost than traditional plastic manufacturing since it is an additive process that yields no waste material.

Who is your muse? My mum has always been a fashion icon/ muse in my eyes; she never leaves the house without red lipstick and always has a particular bag for every outfit. She exudes elegance, even if it is just going to dim sum on Sundays. She always said, "It is better to overdress than to underdress." My mum has also always been vocal about how comfortable what she's wearing is, the quality of the fabric and how a colour can affect someone's skin tone. Her perspective and what she values in clothing has really moulded me into the designer I am today.

How do you hope people feel while wearing your clothes? Comfortable, colourful and confident. I hope I can continue to create clothing that exudes elegance and energy without sacrificing comfort.

Where can we see more? Online at celinekwan.com or on Instagram at [@celinekwan_](https://www.instagram.com/celinekwan_). ✨

Beautiful bunting

cut out and affix your new friends to string however you like. we've provided handy markings on the back of each critter so you can slice an opening and thread string through. enjoy!

ILLUSTRATIONS CASS URQUHART



hot tip:
struggling to
thread your string?
seal the frayed end with
a bit of sticky tape
as a quick fix.



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on the nose

A FEW PECULIAR AND RATHER STINKY PERFUME INGREDIENTS THAT HAVE HELPED US SMELL GOOD FOR YONKS.

Words **Shannon Jenkins**

AMBERGRIS – *Smells like: manure, damp forest floor*

This waxy ingredient secreted by sperm whales has played a big part in the perfume world for more than 1000 years. It's a fixative, which means it has nifty properties that make fragrances last longer on skin. Ambergris smells absolutely horrific when fresh – like faecal matter, to be exact – but like a fine wine, it gets better with age. As it drifts through the ocean, it takes on a complex sweet and earthy aroma. Ambergris is harvested from the shores of beaches, and as you can imagine, is pretty damn hard to find. This means that just a kilo of the stuff can cost tens of thousands of dollars. These days, synthetic alternatives are far more common than real ambergris.

FRANKINCENSE – *Smells like: spice, wood*

You might recognise frankincense as one of the special gifts presented by three famous wise guys to an even famous-er baby. It's an aromatic gum resin that's usually farmed from trees in East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, and according to Dominique Roques' book *In Search of Perfumes*, it has "perfumed four millennia of human history throughout Africa, Arabia, Mesopotamia and the eastern Mediterranean". Aside from being used in the rituals and ceremonies of various religions, frankincense often makes an appearance in perfumes that reference spice and incense.

CALONE – *Smells like: the ocean, melon*

This chemical (known as Watermelon Ketone among science-y types) was discovered by a little company called Pfizer in 1966. Like a few of the scents on this list, Calone is pretty awful when sniffed at full strength. When diluted, however, it can be used to evoke breezy seaside vibes and has a similar quality to ozone (another fresh scent that smells like the air after it's rained), except it's on the fruitier side. You'll recognise this curious ingredient in the wave of aquatic perfumes that became popular in the '90s, like Davidoff Cool Water.

MUSK – *Smells like: sweet, powdery skin*

Most folks are familiar with the warm, slightly sensual scent of musk. The origin of the smell, however, is lesser known (and is yet another example of animal-related discoveries that make us

wonder: what the heck were you doing to find that out?). In nature, musk comes from the sexual pheromone-producing 'scent glands' between the legs of the now-endangered male musk deer. Real musk was potent stuff and needed to be diluted to be palatable for the human snoz. It was used in fragrances for thousands of years, up until a few decades ago. Synthetic alternatives and natural substitutes like ambrette seed and muskwood are the main sources of 'musk' today, and often have a sweet, powdery scent rather than the funky aroma of deer-derived musk.

COUMARIN – *Smells like: vanilla, hay*

This sweet-smelling chemical compound is naturally occurring in plants like the tonka bean (a popular perfume ingredient in its own right), lavender, cinnamon and sweetgrass, and is also produced artificially. Coumarin was used as a cheap flavouring alternative to vanilla back in the day, but was eventually banned from use in food due to its potential toxicity when consumed in high doses. The ingredient continues to be widely used as the base note in perfumes to add warmth and depth and can be found in many popular scents.

INDOLE – *Smells like: faeces*

Ah, yes. Another example of a common perfume ingredient that smells like shit – literally. In low doses, though, indole adds a little somethin' somethin' to fragrances. That's because it's naturally found in many flowers (usually the white ones) like jasmine and gardenia, which means you can't create realistic floral perfumes without it. Surprisingly, a lot of the most alluring perfumes nail the balance between slightly gross smells and great smells. Indole in particular is rather animalic (aka a bit funky) and it triggers a pleasure response in our weird brains.

HEDIONE – *Smells like: jasmine, citrus*

This synthetic ingredient was created in the late '50s and became hugely popular in the fragrance industry as an alternative to jasmine (minus the stinky indole). It made its perfume debut in 1966, in the form of Dior's Eau Sauvage. Some scientists reckon hedione stimulates a part of the brain that releases sex hormones in women. Makes sense, then, that the ingredient takes its name from Hedone – the Greek goddess of sensual pleasures. ✿



Photo Emily Wang



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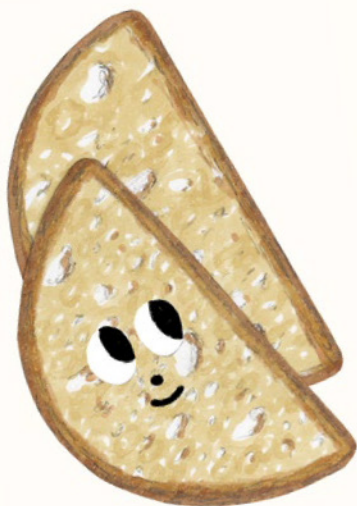




What's for dinner?

you're staring blankly at the fridge,
stomach rumbling, wondering what the
heck to cook tonight. that's where these
delicious summer meals come in.
they're for times when you **need**
a quick, tasty feed.

*(and can't be arsed
overthinking it)*



RECIPES **PHOEBE THORBURN** AKA **HONEYBUNCH OF ONION TOPS**
ILLUSTRATIONS **MONICA TRAN**

leek & parsley butterbean toast

SERVES 2

toast counts
as dinner

*A hearty yet vibrant
toast combination that
takes only 10 minutes
to prepare. Most of the
ingredients are shelf
stable, too.*

INGREDIENTS

- olive oil
- 1 x 400g tin butter beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 leek, washed thoroughly and sliced into half-moons
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- handful of parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp capers, drained and chopped
- squeeze of lemon
- salt and pepper
- toast, buttered (to serve)



METHOD

Heat a generous drizzle of olive oil in a medium frypan over high heat. Once hot, add the drained beans. Leave for a few minutes before jiggling the pan to flip them over.

Once the beans are lightly crisp and golden on both sides, remove to a plate. Add the sliced leek to the pan, drop the heat to low and stir for a few minutes until the leek is soft and starting to caramelise (don't rush them). Add the garlic and stir for another minute.

Add the beans back to the pan, along with the parsley, capers, lemon juice and a sprinkling of salt and pepper. Toss to combine.

Serve on buttered toast.



ADD. →
hummus
fried egg
bacon bits
chilli oil

SWAP OUT

butter beans	cannellini beans, navy beans, small pieces of firm tofu
onion & garlic	use garlic olive oil and the green stems of the leek (alternatively use dark leafy greens, like silverbeet or kale)
parsley	soft herbs like dill, coriander, mint
lemon juice	apple cider vinegar





fatteh with chickpeas & herbs

SERVES 2

tins are
your friend!

This is my version of the popular Levantine dish. It's a beautiful celebration of simple staples: salty, golden, blistering chickpeas with a confetti flourish of fresh herbs laced with garlic and lemon juice. Fatteh is traditionally made with pita bread, but I've finished mine with crunchy croutons.

INGREDIENTS

- neutral oil (e.g. sunflower, grapeseed, rice bran)
- 1 x 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- generous pinch of dried chilli flakes
- small handful of coriander, finely chopped
- small handful of dill, finely chopped
- small handful of parsley, finely chopped
- olive oil
- 1/2 lemon, juiced
- salt and pepper
- 1 slice of bread
- natural yoghurt and bread of your choice (to serve)

METHOD

Heat a generous glug of vegetable oil in a medium frypan over high heat (one with deep sides helps minimise spluttering). Once hot, pour in the drained chickpeas and shake the pan to disperse. Leave for a couple of minutes to crisp up (they might pop and splutter – that's normal), then jiggle the pan to turn them over. Leave for a couple more minutes until they are golden and crisp, then add the garlic, chilli and a generous pinch of salt. Shake the pan for around 10 seconds until everything is combined and fragrant.

Tip the chickpeas into a bowl lined with paper towel to drain, then transfer to a serving platter, along with the chopped herbs, another drizzle of olive oil, the lemon juice and a grind of pepper. Stir to combine.

To make your croutons, chop your slice of bread into small squares. Put the frypan back on medium heat, add the bread and let it crisp up on all sides (add another drizzle of oil, if needed) – being careful they don't burn. Sprinkle over the chickpeas.

Add a dollop of yoghurt before serving. Eat with your bread of choice, getting a little bit of everything in each bite.

ADD:

fried egg
roast veggies
(potato, pumpkin,
zucchini, squash,
capsicum)

SWAP OUT

garlic	use garlic olive oil in place of regular olive oil
yoghurt	coconut yoghurt





baked basmati with halloumi and olive, walnut & pomegranate relish

the tray bake

SERVES 2

Baked rice is such a comfort – it creates a buttery, fragrant base to this glamorous one-tray meal. Halloumi bakes best, but feta, a non-dairy version or even tofu are excellent substitutes.



ADD:
roast veggies
(eg beetroot,
green capsicum,
zucchini)

INGREDIENTS

– 200g halloumi (or feta or non-dairy cheese alternative)

Relish

- 1 handful of walnuts
- 1/2 pomegranate (arils only)
- 1 x 230g jar plain mixed olives, drained and finely chopped
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- drizzle of maple syrup
- small handful of parsley, finely chopped
- small handful of mint, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- salt and pepper

Rice

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 1 tbsp butter (or vegan alternative)
- pinch of salt
- 440ml (1 3/4 cups) water
- 2 sprigs of mint



METHOD

Preheat your oven to 180°C. Once hot, tip the **walnuts onto a** baking tray and roast for 5 minutes, until golden. **Set** aside to cool.

Add the basmati to a baking dish (preferably one with a lid). Cut the butter into small chunks and disperse throughout the rice. Add a pinch of salt and the mint sprigs, and pour over the water. Add the lid or cover tightly with foil before baking in the preheated oven for 30 minutes.

Roughly chop the roasted walnuts, then add to a bowl along with the remaining relish ingredients and mix to combine.

Slice the halloumi (or cheese of your choice) into small slabs. Take the lid/foil off the rice and turn the oven over to a 'grill x fan' setting (if your oven has it, otherwise turn the heat all the way up). Arrange the cheese on top of the rice and return to the oven for 15 minutes, or until lightly golden.

Spoon the relish over the dish and serve.

SWAP OUT

halloumi	firm tofu, cubed and tossed in vegetable oil
pomegranate	red grapes, chopped into small pieces
maple syrup	liquid sweetener such as agave, rice malt syrup, honey



mango & passionfruit lassi pops

sweet and simple

MAKES 6 X 1/2 CUP-CAPACITY POPSICLES

These are pure sunshine. I've used mango nectar for its assured fragrant sweetness and smooth consistency – however, in the height of summer, when mangoes are at their best, using the equivalent amount of fresh mango works well.

Note: Make these the night before. You'll also need popsicle moulds or sleeves.

INGREDIENTS

- 250ml (1 cup) mango nectar
- 375ml (1 1/2 cups) natural coconut yoghurt
- 1 large ripe banana, cut into chunks
- 1/4 tsp cardamom
- pinch of salt
- 2 passionfruit, pulp only

METHOD

In a blender or food processor, blend the mango nectar, coconut yoghurt, banana, cardamom and pinch of salt until smooth.

Add the passionfruit pulp and blitz briefly to combine.

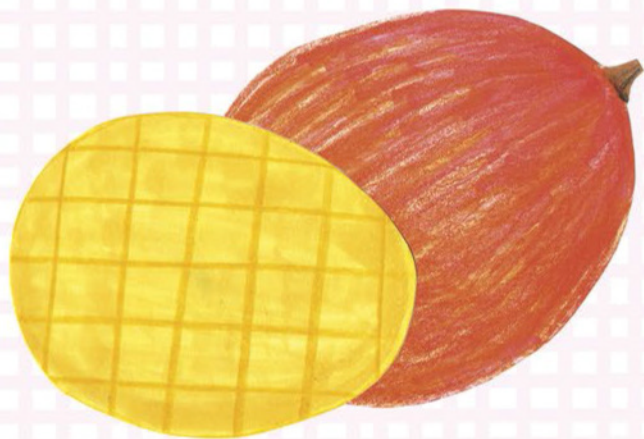
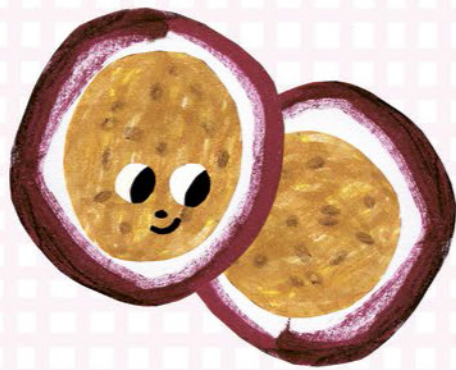
Pour the mixture into your popsicle moulds. Seal or insert sticks/handles, then transfer to the freezer overnight, to set.

(before you buy new, check your local op shop)

SWAP OUT

mango nectar	fresh mango – however it won't produce as smooth or sweet a popsicle. Apricot nectar is delicious (without the passionfruit)
coconut yoghurt	greek yoghurt





help! i stuffed it up...

Sometimes things go awry in the kitchen. But don't give up hope! Before you dump anything in the bin, consult Phoebe's tips for success.

QUICK FIXES

- Too salty? Add sweetness + acid
- Too bitter? Add sweetness
- Too sour? Add sweetness + creaminess
- Too sweet? Add acid, herbs or salt
- Too spicy? Add creaminess



AH! IT'S BURNING!

- Cook slower on lower heat
- Add a pinch of salt to sautéing vegetables
- Cover your baking dish with foil, oven-safe lid or **baking tray**

WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG TO COOK?

- Chop your veggies smaller (a sharp knife makes enjoyable work of this)
- Give your oven enough time to heat up and try not to open the door unnecessarily

WHY IS IT STICKING?

- Try not to fiddle with food more than necessary. Gauge browning and done-ness by sight, then flip just once
- Heat oil in the pan before adding your ingredients ✿

*see more of phoebe's recipes
at honeybunchofoniontops.com*



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that's a wrap

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equally sweet pressies.

ILLUSTRATIONS **JANELLE BURGER**







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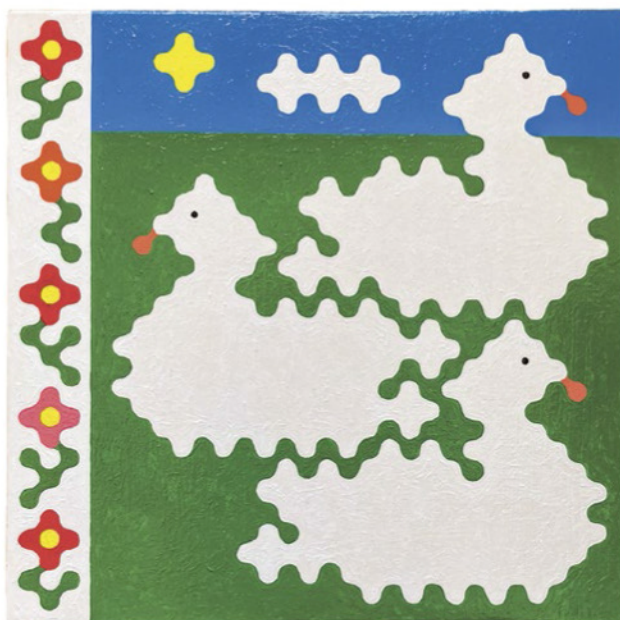


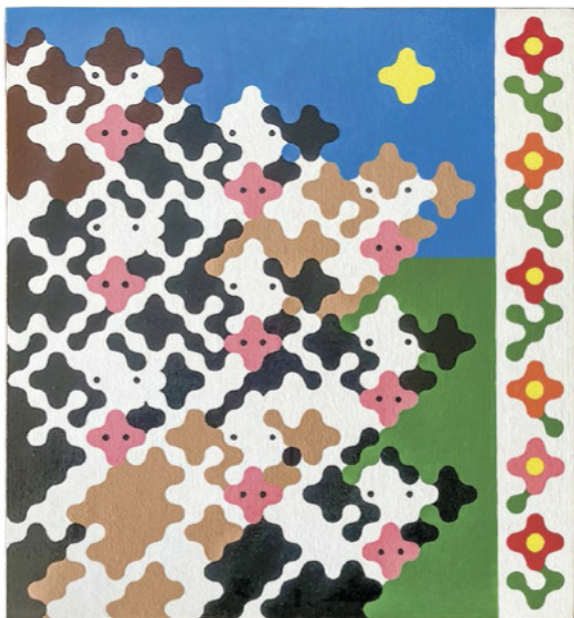
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beauty and the beast

JOE O'DONNELL PAINTS WOBBLY
PET PORTRAITS.

Tell us a bit about yourself, please. I live in Whalley Range, a suburb of Manchester in England. I can usually be found at my desk working on paintings and illustrations while listening to the Do!! You!!! Show on NTS radio. When I'm not working, I love getting out on my bike or going skateboarding.

What's the story behind your 'pixelated' aesthetic? I have a desire for all my individual pieces to belong in the same 'universe'. I wanted a style that could be instantly identifiable, and I found the best way for me to get to that was by setting myself restrictions on how I would construct my pieces. I consider my approach to be more akin to playing with building blocks as opposed to traditional drawing or painting.

Why a series on animals? I was struggling to home in on a subject matter and felt that I was overthinking the meaning of my work. I tried to move away from any kind of concept and tried to focus more on the process and simply paint things that I liked for no reason other than that. I have always loved animals and something clicked for me when I started to paint them. I never envisioned my work taking this direction, but these days a large portion of my time is spent working on pet portraits.

What's your favourite animal to paint? At the moment it's chickens – I love the bright red!

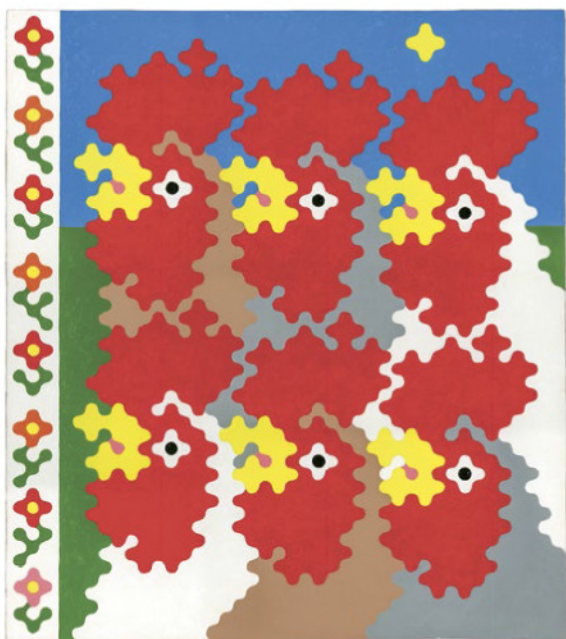
How do one of these paintings begin? My work starts as a vector image and can go through several stages of tweaking before I start the actual painting.

What made you swap digital art for painting? Digital art is still a major part of my process, but it's no longer the be-all and end-all of my work. I love bringing my work into the physical world and I think it benefits from having a hint of human error in the brush strokes or the way the colours are mixed. I feel proud to have made my laptop just one of several tools, rather than being where my entire practice takes place from beginning to end.

You're mindlessly doodling – what's on the page? Probably some entry-level graffiti. It's a subculture that has always intrigued and inspired me – I've never really gotten the hang of it. I think my dissatisfaction with my stylistic inconsistencies in my freehand drawing is a big part of why my artwork has taken such a regimented direction.

What are you working on next? I'm planning to just keep enjoying making work. I've been learning how to make very rudimentary frames for my paintings, so it would be cool to show my art to people at an exhibition.

Where can we see more? On Instagram at @donnie_odonnell. ✨



feel the fizz

BY GOLLY, THE SHOPS ARE FLUSH WITH FANCY SODAS. CARO COOPER AND JACK VENING REVIEW EIGHT.

Illustrations Ana Gamboa



NAKED LIFE – LEMONADE CUCUMBER

On first impact, I was stoked. I could have sworn I was smashing a Kirk's lemonade. Crisp, effervescent. Then came the cucumber extract, a nice, fresh adult touch. Then – *then* – came the wave of sweeteners: monk fruit, erythritol, stevia. I am all for natural sweeteners, but there's no tricking your tastebuds. These low-calorie additives are like those long-sleeved tees covered in tattoos: from a distance you might be fooled, but when you get up close, you just feel sad. The bottle and branding transported me to a sunny Noosa afternoon and made me want hot blonde friends with yachts (I'm working on it). I would buy this again, but I would cut it 70/30 with plain soda water to reduce that sweetener kick. It would also make for a pleasant summery cocktail. CC



CAPI – GRAPEFRUIT

By now we all know Capi. The Melbourne company makes the little tonic water bottles you see at every fancy wine store. Capi is the sparkling water brand the waiter brings out at the low-key yet somehow still so expensive restaurant because you forgot to say, "Please, tap water's fine, take pity." For a drink made from a bitter fruit, this grapefruit soda is sweet, refreshing and remarkably smooth. It's in the kind of squat little bottle that reminds one of a health potion in a videogame. It makes you want to wear one on your belt when you're on an adventure in case a goblin bites you. Does that make it worth buying? Go get bitten by a goblin and see how you feel. At the very least you'll have enjoyed a lovely and balanced grapefruit soda before succumbing to your wounds. JV



YUMBO SODA CO – LEMONADE

Of all the sodas I drank, this is the most 'soda' one – as in fizzy-water soda, as in there's not a lot going on here except for bubbles. This is not necessarily a bad thing. Soda doesn't have to make a big statement – fancy soda, least of all. It's dry and lemony, but not even very lemony. It's a soft drink for people who can't acknowledge they want a soft drink. It's soda for people who haven't had fun in years, and they're fine with it. It's soda for people who gave up their dreams for a comfortable career they're not passionate about. It tastes like someone saw a picture of a lemon and said, "Leave the rest up to me." You could rehydrate after a casual tennis match with this soda, which, judging by the extremely pet nat-adjacent label, might be the exact crowd it's targeting. JV



REMEDY – RASPBERRY SODALY

My dentist told me to stop drinking so much apple-cider vinegar. He said that's why my teeth look bad, but I think it's got more to do with the pens I chew all day long like a teething puppy. This Raspberry Sodaly (Soda-lee? So-Dali? Sod-ally?) has an apple-cider vinegar base with raspberry and lemon flavouring and natural sweeteners. I could feel my dentist watching me as I drank this. Creep. I took a before and after photo of my teeth and they didn't look any worse after drinking it, so I guess this gets the dental industry's tick of approval. It's pitched as tasting like red frogs and raspberry lollies, and it's true – Remedy knows its stuff. While nothing can hide the artificial sweetener aftertaste, the vinegar does a pretty good job at masking it. Beware though, drink this too fast and you'll be burping vinegary red frogs all afternoon. CC



STRANGELOVE - YUZU FROM JAPAN

I'd buy this again just for the bottle. Even if the drink tasted bad – which it didn't – the label, and the glass bottle that is lightly ribbed for the drinker's pleasure, are perfection. If you're a fan of yuzu, the Japanese citrus fruit that StrangeLove describes as a cross between lemon, mandarin and grapefruit, this may just be your go-to summer drink (or mixer). The yuzu adds a refreshing tartness, but also a somewhat metallic taste (in a non-offensive way). It's not like you're sucking on coins, but it's not orange-juice sweet either. I have a very immature palate so find this level of connoisseurship difficult to muster. (Also, don't suck on coins.) This soda had just the right degree of gentle fizz. You can sip it or slam it, but you'd look like a right oaf to be skolling something so pretty. CC



BOBBY – COLA

As a naturally gassy woman, I've spent a small fortune trying to boost my microbiome in the hope of deflating my belly and reducing my partner's need to run from the room every five minutes. I'm no scientist (an A in senior Chemistry? Why yes, I did), but I doubt the 2g of probiotic fibre per can here is enough to make a difference to my 'situation'. I'm also sceptical of anything cashing in on gut health. Still, as far as colas go, this has to be the healthiest around. Sadly, like most healthy things, it's a poor substitute for its junk cousin. My first sip was fresh but sip two had me wondering if the creators had ever drunk an ice-cold Coke in summer. It tasted as though they'd only read about what cola tastes like. Unlike enamel-stripping Coke, Bobby Cola leaves a weird aftertaste, too – it's those pesky low-calorie sweeteners again. CC



FAMOUS SODA CO – BLOOD ORANGE

This is the kind of sugar-free soda that makes you check the label to make sure it's actually sugar free. A kid could drink this soda and have no complaints. You'd mix this with five other soft drinks at a KFC with free refills. It's got that soda flavour that makes you say, "Mmm, that's soda." I'm not sure if Famous Soda Co is actually a famous soda company or if they're just having a bit of fun with the name. I haven't kept as abreast of the relative fame of soda companies as I would like. I've been busy with work, and stuff's been crazy in the world generally, right? I know that's not a real excuse. Forgive me. Please do not come for my neck for not knowing who Famous Soda Co is. I'm learning and growing every day, and I appreciate your patience. JV



ST ALI – CASCARA

You pick up a can of St Ali Cascara soda. "Cascara?" you think. "That sounds like the name for dried skin of coffee cherries, a coffee-industry by-product! Surely it hasn't been turned into a sustainable vanilla and citrus soda?" Well, it has! And it troubles me. Coffee and citrus trouble me. There's always something unnerving about your first sip, like stepping onto a broken escalator. "Time for the weird thing," you tell your brain. "What's happening?!" your brain screams back. Once you calm down, you'll actually find a soda that's rich and striking, but good lord is it *complex* – there's so much going on! Fruit! Vanilla! Coffee! Let's all just calm down. This soda is that friend who's doing 15 projects at once. Will they ever concentrate enough to finish a single one? Probably not, but everyone is too overwhelmed to care. JV✿

ARCHETYPES



GUCCI
Garden

SYDNEY



Dream in colour

Let your pencils loose on this colouring-in from the Gucci Garden Archetypes exhibition.

NOVEMBER 17, 2022 - JANUARY 15, 2023

You don't need a green thumb to explore this enchanted garden! If you love fashion and creativity, the Gucci Garden Archetypes exhibition will be one to explore this summer. It's a multi-sensory exhibition dedicated to creative director Alessandro Michele's unique, eccentric and magical fashion campaigns – and it's coming to Sydney! The exhibition features a hidden imaginary garden, a mirrored labyrinth and cinematic multimedia installations that bring Alessandro's inspirations to life. Experiencing the immersive Gucci Garden Archetypes is like falling directly into the brand's wondrous, one-of-a-kind ad campaigns. We've created a line drawing from the 'Urban Romanticism' exhibit room based on the Fall Winter 2015 campaign for you to weave your own magic on.



Artist **Sophie McPike** used acrylic gouache to bring her colouring-in to life and we're simply obsessed. Pencils, textas or even those old-school wind-up crayons are all good with us too, though. ✿

GUCCI
Garden
SYDNEY

This fun activity was brought to you in partnership with our friends at Gucci. Take a wander through the free Gucci Garden Archetypes exhibition at the Powerhouse Ultimo in Sydney from November 17, 2022 to January 15, 2023. Book your visit at [gucci.com/au/en_au/st/capsule/gucci-garden-sydney](https://www.gucci.com/au/en_au/st/capsule/gucci-garden-sydney).



that love-hate thing

GREAT CINEMA AND TELLY ABOUT ENEMIES WHO FALL IN LOVE.

Words **Kate Stanton**

PILLOW TALK (1959) There's a lot about this bubbly '50s comedy that wouldn't fly today, like a telephone shortage that forces its two protagonists to share a 'party line' – a joint phone system that allows them to listen in on each other's calls (OK, maybe that would be fun). Doris Day plays Jan Morrow, a career-focused interior designer who's angry that playboy Brad Allen (Rock Hudson) hogs up their shared line chatting to so many women. Brad and Jan fight/flirt all the time on the phone, often from their respective beds, but don't meet in person until Brad spots Jan on the town. Knowing that Jan would hate him if she knew the truth, Brad pretends to be a Texas rancher rather unimaginatively named Rex Stetson. Though not groundbreaking by today's standards, it's fun to see wholesome types like Day and Hudson trade spicy quips that allude so casually to sex, all while wearing the world's most glamorous pyjamas.

FIRE ISLAND (2022) Though I tried my darndest to stuff this list with *Pride and Prejudice* adaptations, my wise editorial overlords asked me to stick with one. But it's a humdinger: a funny, thoughtful look at how race, class and queerness intersect with love and community. Screenwriter and star Joel Kim Booster read Jane Austen's most famous novel during a real-life trip to The Pines on Fire Island (think grown-up schoolies for gay New Yorkers), when he was struck by how much it resonated with his experience of hierarchies within gay culture. Booster plays the fun-loving Noah, who embarks on an epic summer holiday with his chosen family of queer BFFs, including Margaret Cho and *SNL*'s Bowen Yang. Noah has several heated misunderstandings with a surly, smouldering lawyer (Conrad Ricamora), including one extremely tension-filled rain scene (directly inspired by 2005's *Pride and Prejudice*). The way two guarded people push and pull at one another's vulnerabilities is so damn electric to watch – especially when they're shirtless and drenched in rain!

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THE PROPOSAL (2009) If you're the type to criticise a movie for being 'predictable' or 'unrealistic', stay far away from this totally absurd rom-com about... deep breaths... a highly strung New York book editor, Margaret (Sandra Bullock), who gets fake-engaged to her assistant, Andrew (Ryan Reynolds), so she doesn't get deported back to Canada. Oh, and she has to spend the weekend before her immigration interview at his grandma's 90th birthday in Alaska. But never mind the flagrant misunderstanding of US immigration law; we're here to watch Bullock and other greats, like Betty White and Mary Steenburgen, be comedic geniuses. A scene where buck-naked Reynolds and Bullock accidentally slam into



each other is slapstick heaven. And how can you not love watching Andrew and Margaret see through one another's grouchy exteriors to their soft, gooey, emotional centres. It's hate-to-love heaven.

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10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU (1999) I swear I hit puberty the day I first saw Patrick Verona (Heath Ledger) slide down a pole and sing Smokey Robinson – one of the sexiest, most transformative moments in film history (fight me). Bad boy Patrick is paid to woo a “tempestuous” outcast, Kat (Julia Stiles), so her sister (Larisa Oleynick) will be allowed to date, according to their strict dad’s weird rule. Maybe it’s a little problematic that a public serenade is all Patrick has to do to thaw Kat’s icy exterior, but who am I to deny Ledger’s undeniable charisma? Or Stiles’ vulnerable, relatable portrayal of a spiky teen feminist who’s rightfully pissed off with the tiresome sexual politics of high-school bros. She nails the essence of the enemies-to-lovers trope in a single poem: “I hate the way I don’t hate you. Not even close. Not even a little bit. Not even at all.” Based on Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew*, this legendary teen movie is about how goddamn refreshing it is to find someone who isn’t scared of how angry you are.

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CRASH LANDING ON YOU (2019) Being attracted to your enemy is a pain in the arse when all they have is a bad attitude, but it’s way worse when they’re a geopolitical enemy, separated from you by decades of sectarian tension and a seemingly impenetrable border. Just ask Seoul heiress and skincare CEO Yoon Se-ri (Son Ye-jin), who accidentally paraglides (stay with me) into North Korea, where

she LITERALLY crash-lands into the muscly arms of a stoic-but-sexy North Korean soldier, Captain Ri (Hyun Bin). They bicker, of course, but he helps her evade capture, and they eventually fall in love (so did the actors in real life; now they’re married!). There’s a loveable cast of side characters, a makeover scene, a fascinating (if slightly rosy) depiction of North Korean life and one of the most heart-wrenchingly romantic conclusions I’ve ever seen on screen. This swoony, heartfelt K-drama (available on Netflix) is 16 episodes long, so grab a bunch of tissues, prepare to ignore numerous plot holes and enjoy the wild, star-crossed ride.

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NORTH AND SOUTH (2004) It’s *Pride and Prejudice* – with labour relations! Based on the Elizabeth Gaskell novel, this dreamy BBC miniseries follows Margaret (Daniela Denby-Ashe), a sheltered minister’s daughter, who moves to a manufacturing town in northern England. She’s rightfully appalled, if a bit snooty, about the consequences of rapid industrialisation (smog, child labour, etc), and clashes with local cotton-mill owner Mr Thornton (Richard Armitage). He sees her as a self-righteous snob (fair), while she sees him as a dour, money-hungry capitalist (also fair!). Thornton is grumpy – in that sexy, misunderstood way, obviously – and he hates how much he fancies the feisty, outspoken heroine (he and Mr Darcy would have lots to discuss). But unlike *Pride and Prejudice*, *North and South* is deeply invested in the struggles of the working class, including a gruff union leader who’s raising support for a citywide strike against poor mill conditions. In classic enemies-to-lovers fashion, though, Margaret and Thornton discover how much they can learn from the person who challenges them the most. ✿



famous last words

FORGET WHAT YOUR PARENTS TAUGHT YOU – BRIDGET MCARTHUR IS SETTING STRAIGHT THE SAYINGS WE GREW UP WITH.

MONEY DOESN'T GROW ON TREES OK, MUM. I bet you didn't think money grew on blockchain or on an NFT picture of a horse, either. Instead of teaching us how money *doesn't* grow, maybe someone should have taught us how it *does* grow, because I honestly have no clue. Our parents' generation just handed us a Dollarmite account and sent us out into the wilderness. Ironically, the bank account made me respect the supposed 'finiteness' of money even less, as it rendered my dollars intangible. If money *did* grow on trees, however – and I'd picked it all to buy the final piece of Snape's dungeon for my *Harry Potter* play set – I would at least have had visual confirmation of its absence and been forced to wait for next year's harvest.

WHINGEING GETS YOU NOWHERE Don't shoot the messenger but whingeing fucking gets you places. I wish it weren't true, I do. But whingeing really works – at least on aeroplanes, in supermarket queues and festival mosh pits. Karens who complain to managers may be despised, but they get that free bulk Milo can with a tiny dent in it, and they get that extra leg room on a flight. Here's a more nuanced lesson: you have to choose if you want to be nice and have friends, or whinge and have things.

IF [INSERT FRIEND'S NAME] JUMPED OFF A BRIDGE, WOULD YOU DO IT TOO? This wasn't a lesson so much as a supposedly foolproof

rebuttal to whatever it was you were trying to convince your parents to let you do – the implication being that just because Isabel is getting her ears pierced doesn't mean you have to, too. These days, decision fatigue has set in and I've frequently found myself tying my bungee cord to someone else so as to avoid making any of my own choices. After several failed food-ordering experiences on a recent trip around Eastern Europe, I decided to only order the same things as my boyfriend, to avoid 'bad-choice self-blame' (#BCSB – get it trending). Whether the food that came out was good or bad, I was happy in the knowledge that it wasn't my fault.

A WATCHED POT NEVER BOILS Putting aside the fact that it does (yes, it came as a shock to us all), our parents clearly hadn't heard of a little thing called mindfulness. I now frequently stare dull-eyed into the dimming shine of a boiling pot, and treasure a moment of quietude, sans phone, as tiny bubbles raise gracefully to the surface. If anything, we don't have to wait long enough. TIME IS MOVING TOO FAST.

TREAT OTHERS HOW YOU WANT TO BE TREATED It's the jewel in every parent's crown, and also probably the most misleading 'lesson' of them all. This mantra has been the source of a lot of conflict in my life. You see, I'm naturally a bit reserved – I'm not a hugger and I hate people seeing me cry. If I'm upset, politely turn away and leave me alone in my room unless I say otherwise. This has created many an unhappy friend who, whenever they cried, would witness me essentially Homer Simpson myself into a bush. I thought I was doing the right thing – that's how *I'd* want to be treated! I've since learnt to treat others how *they* want to be treated. Sure, when it comes to strangers, use your own preferences as a rough compass (just don't be offended if they don't happen to share them). But when it comes to mates, surely you owe them the tiny effort of getting to know their likes and dislikes. And why not let them know yours while you're at it, too? ✿



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REBECCA VARCOE IS LOGGED OFF
AND LOVING LIFE.

In 2005, my world changed when I was introduced to MySpace. Immediately I became at home online, negotiating extra screen time on my family's shared computer, all on the basis that I was "CODING, DAD". Of course, coding meant altering my page's HTML to change the colour of the background and font, and to add flair to my 'Top 8' friends. A monster had been created, and it wasn't a phase.

I became an early adopter of every online platform I saw. I got Facebook before anyone I knew because a boy I liked at my Christmas casual job told me to add him, and I've had Instagram since it was still OK to post pictures with filters that objectively made you look like shit, rather than like an Eastern European model. I maintained fire-emoji streaks on Snapchat, and once tweeted something that got 10,000 likes. I was a pretty big deal online.

But now? Now I'm offline. I'm *offline*, everyone. If you try and find my Twitter, you'll see it's been months since I logged on. I don't have TikTok. I thought Snapchat had gone out of business when the founder landed Miranda Kerr after saving himself for marriage. YouTube? I only use that for videos that show me how to change out the blade on the thing I use to grate my feet during my DIY pedicures. I've logged off and plugged into LIFE.

I don't mean to be smug, though I do love to be smug. My life has changed in ways I didn't really intend for. It started by necessity during the mania of Melbourne's first lockdowns – I handed my Twitter login to a friend so they could change my password and lock me out. Then, I started teaching at a high school. Weirdly, since starting this famously easy job, those pockets of time I used to spend scrolling have rapidly disappeared. Teachers' social media pages are also locked down harder than Western Australia's borders during a global pandemic, so my audience to whom I perform an idealised version of my life has become strictly limited to people who know better than to fall for my shit. Without the dopamine hit of winning an argument with a misogynist on Twitter or getting a like from an influencer with perfect skin on Instagram, the sheen... dulled.

Here's the thing, though – I don't tell people these are the reasons why I've logged off. What I do instead is shrug and say, "I'm pretty offline these days," with an inflection that suggests I'm so offline I don't even know what 'being online' means. I imply that I never had a crippling social media addiction, because I've always just been too busy reading dense books or watching documentaries. I still use Instagram, I admit. But more like a Pinterest board to save posts from American women who have children with names like Kennedy and who post handy DIYs. Sometimes a friend will send me a link to a TikTok which I open in a browser window as though I am 75 years old.

A while ago, some friends and I converged to spend a few days by the beach. Everyone was having such a good time that phones kept being left unattended in other rooms, forgotten in handbags. It became a bit of a running joke: someone would ask the time and another would cry out, "I don't know, I'm unplugged!" throwing their hands in the air. Someone would ask for music to be put on and another voice would yell, "Sorry, can't help you, I'm unplugged." That's how I'm trying to be. Unplugged in a beach house. Eat, pray, loving without the algorithm. ✿



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